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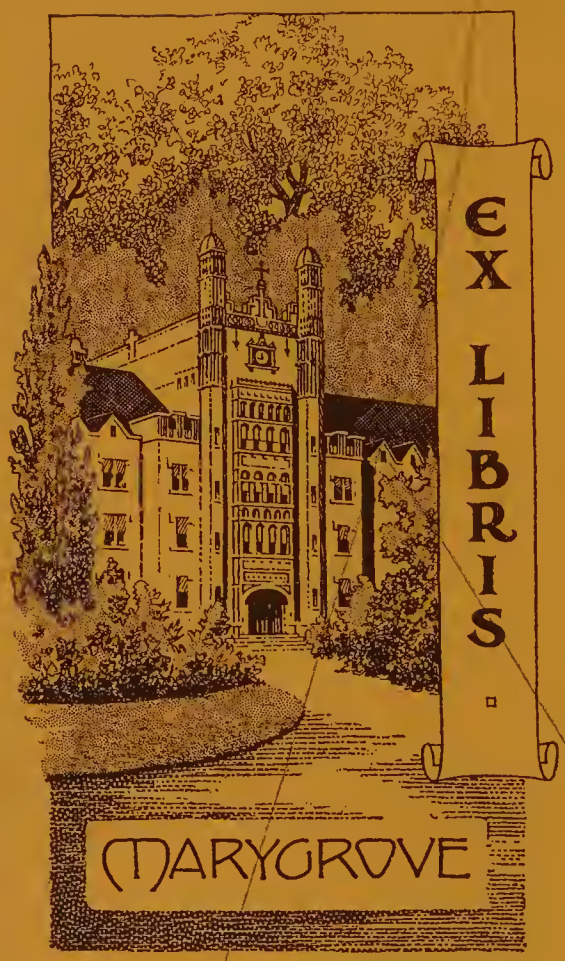


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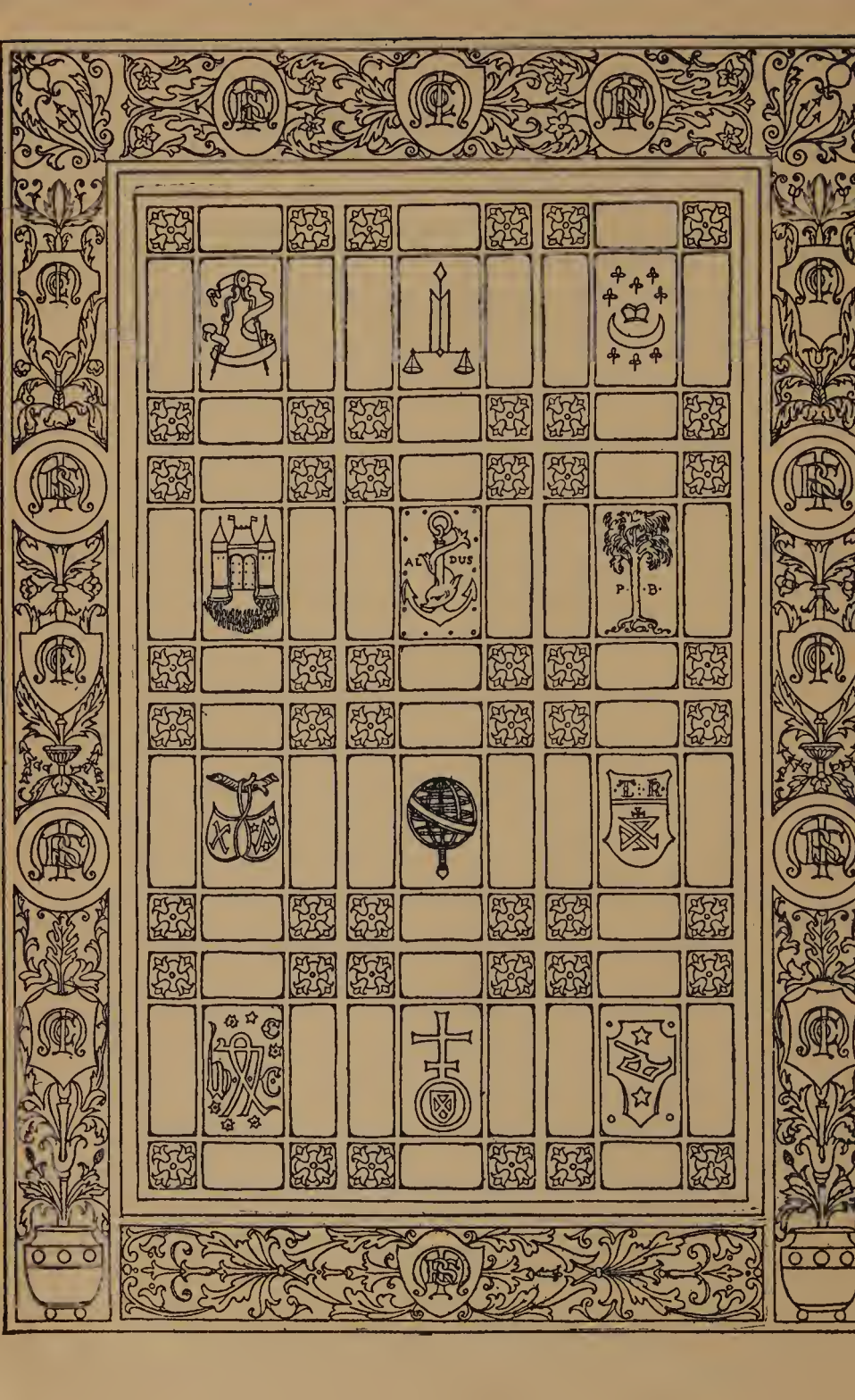
# Marcus Aurelius Antoninus
## to Himself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# Marcus Aurelius Antoninus

## to Himself

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

NELSON GLENN McCREA

ANTHON PROFESSOR OF THE LATIN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

PUBLISHERS NEW YORK MCMXXVIII

THE MODERN READERS' SERIES

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Set up and electrotyped.
Published August, 1928.

SET UP AND ELECTROTYPED BY T. MOREY & SON

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BY
STRATFORD PRESS, INC.

# INTRODUCTION

The little volume whose authentic title is "Marcus Aurelius Antoninus to Himself" is unique in ancient literature. To what happy chance its preservation was due is not yet known. No reference to it has been found in contemporary or immediately subsequent records. Not until the eleventh century do we come upon traces of its existence; not until 1558 was the book itself published. To read it is to be admitted to intimate communion with one of the most remarkable men that ever sat upon a throne. Tireless, just, self-sacrificing administrator for over forty years, he yet brings to mind the line that Wordsworth used of Milton:

"Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart."

Notebook, rather than diary, this record of his inner life shows on every page his persistent effort to state to himself without prejudice or predilection the real significance of the details of human experience, as these details affected the determination of his own feeling and his own action. At times expressive of discouragement and doubt, but for the most part resolutely cheerful, these reflections and self-admonishings reveal an heroic struggle with a burden of Imperial responsibilities almost too great to be borne, a high resolve to be, as he himself expresses it, "upright, not uprighted," "to hold the van, as one who waits for the retreat from

life to sound." [1] Death, indeed, might well be entreated to make haste to come, lest if the strain should be too long continued, he also, like others, might "forget himself." [2]

Born in 121 A.D. of a line already distinguished for public service, Marcus had been adopted, and designated as heir to the throne by Antoninus Pius when in 138 the latter succeeded Hadrian. There followed twenty-three years of co-operation with his adoptive father in administrative activity, years marked by such utter devotion and forgetfulness of personal ease as to surpass even that like loyalty to Hadrian which had gained for Antoninus himself the surname of Pius. Thus it happened that when in 161 Marcus Aurelius became ruler of the far-flung dominion of Rome and ultimate source of authority for all that the western world then knew of civilization, he brought to this exacting task a mind and character trained by long apprenticeship in the great tradition of government established by three notable executives, Trajan, Hadrian, and Antoninus. The Empire was then at the height of its prosperity and apparent strength. Law and peace, the other names of Rome, were everywhere beneficent. But Fortune proved less kind to Marcus than to his predecessors. His brother, Lucius Verus, returned victorious, it is true, from the war against the Parthians; but his legions brought with them that devastating plague which did so much to hasten the decline of the Empire. In the midst of the terror caused by this uncontrollable disease came the dismaying news that

[1] III. 5. [2] IX. 3.

the defenders of the frontier along the Danube had been overwhelmed by hordes of Quadi and Marcomanni from the north. Thus, in 167, began for the Emperor the supreme test of his fortitude, the exile, broken only by occasional interruptions, from Rome to the scene of war, the upper reaches of the Danube east of Vienna. Though in his earlier life he had enjoyed good health, he had never been robust. His physique, weakened by years of close application to administrative duties, lacked resilience to meet the hardships of the campaign. Indigestion and insomnia became chronic. We learn from Galen that theriac, a sedative drug, became almost a food for him. The end, in March, 180, was characteristic: "Why weep for me? Think of the army and its safety. I do but go before. Farewell." Then silence—save for the immortal notebook, "the high-water mark," as it has been justly called, "of the unassisted virtue of man." [1] Internal evidence goes far to prove that the entries were made during the closing years of the Emperor's life. The experience, however, with which they deal is clearly co-extensive with the whole of that life. These judgments, therefore, represent the final results of long-continued observation and reflection.

His analysis of the problems that affect human behavior and happiness is throughout that of the Stoic school of thought. Zeno, the founder of this school, began his work at Athens soon after the death of Alexander the Great. He was born in Cyprus of

[1] F. W. H. Myers, "Marcus Aurelius Antoninus," in *Essays Classical* (Macmillan and Co., 1911), p. 223.

Semitic ancestry, and taught, or rather preached, with a fervor and assurance more appropriate to a prophet than to a philosopher. It is not unreasonable to see in this first exposition of Stoic doctrine "a Hebraic gospel clothed in the garments of Greek philosophy." [1] But, unlike Epicureanism, whose adherents were repeatedly criticized for their slavish repetition of the teaching of their master, Stoicism, as the centuries passed, utilized the new light thrown upon its tenets by accumulating experience. In particular, Panætius of Rhodes, who in the middle of the second century B.C. became a member of the circle of the younger Scipio Africanus, so modified the Stoic paradoxes as to make of this system almost a religion for the educated Roman. As expounded by Panætius, this view of life, in its conception of a world order to which the individual was bound to conform, in its treatment of the deities of popular belief as manifestations of the one divine Being, in its insistence on the duties which every man owed to society and the State, was found to be quite consonant with all those traits of character that patriotic feeling admired in the old typical national heroes. Its splendor fascinated Cicero, and under the Empire "the greatest of the jurists were of Stoic tendencies, and hence we find at the basis of their work the characteristic doctrines of the Stoic philosophy . . . the conception of a universal law and of the brotherhood of man." [2]

It is, however, a far cry from the haughty, uncom-

[1] H. D. Sedgwick, *Marcus Aurelius* (Yale University Press, 1921), p. 27.
[2] W. A. Dunning, *A History of Political Theories, Ancient and Mediæval* (The Macmillan Co., 1916), pp. 127–28.

promising, and impracticable idealism of Zeno to the winning moderation, the gracious firmness, the wistful confidence of Marcus Aurelius. He is, of course, not at all concerned with a systematic exposition of the faith that sustains him. He seeks no converts. But he would fain strengthen his own courage "to do the work in hand with scrupulous and unaffected dignity, affectionately, freely, justly," [1] to endure to the end as "a living man, full-aged, a citizen, a Roman, an Imperator." [2] He would keep at bay the despondency which assails him as he writes: "Protest—till you burst! Men will go on all the same," [3] and again: "Faith and honor, justice and truth, have taken wing

"From wide-wayed earth to heaven." [4]

In such perilous moments he reminds himself that "the immortal gods do not lose patience at having to bear age after age with the froward generations of men; but still show for them all manner of concern. Shall you, whose end is in a moment, lose heart? you who are one of the froward?" [5]

Like Wordsworth's "Happy Warrior," Marcus

"Turns his necessity to glorious gain"

and

"Finds comfort in himself and in his cause,"

having the settled conviction that "destiny is good; for the man's apportioned lot sweeps on with the world's sweep." [6] He dwells again and again on certain ideas fundamental in Stoicism which give him warrant for a high serenity.

[1] II. 5. [2] III. 5. [3] VIII. 4. [4] V. 33. [5] VII. 70. [6] III. 4.

There is, he reflects, a divine government of the world. Through every part, however small, of the beautiful framework of the universe courses ceaselessly a divine energy, at once the ultimate source of its vitality and its guiding principle to ever fuller realization of the possibilities of its nature. All things, animate and inanimate, are thus linked together by a common relation to an increasing purpose, to which each makes its appropriate contribution. "The plants, the sparrows, the ants, spiders, bees, all help to weld the order of the world." [1] "Even the emerald forever says: 'Whatever anyone else does, my duty is to be emerald and keep my proper hue.'" [2] The ordered beauty of the whole is made possible only by the faithful co-operation of the individual parts. All things work together to fashion, in G ethe's phrase,

"The garment of life which the Deity wears." [3]

Stoicism is thus pantheistic and draws, further, the conclusion that "nothing is hurtful to the part which is good for the whole," [4] and conversely, "what is not good for the swarm is not good for the bee." [5]

This obedience to law, however, may be unconscious or conscious. Man alone, herein highly privileged, is endowed with that reasoning faculty which is the supreme attribute of Deity. Through the exercise of this divine faculty he is at once able to comprehend the august system of which he is a part, and of his own free choice, for no one can rob him of his will,[6] to make himself consciously a co-worker with God. It is a high

[1] V. 1. [2] VII. 15. [3] *Faust*, Part I, Scene 1. [4] X. 6. [5] VI. 54. [6] XI. 36.

calling, but by no means easy to follow; for within are "the passions that turn their back on reason, insincerity, self-love, and discontent with destiny," [1] and without, in human intercourse, one encounters only too often "ingratitude, violence, cunning, jealousy, self-seeking." [2] Whence, then, is to be had the strength required for the task? The answer is, from that reason and will which is sovereign in each human being, "self-excited and self-swayed, which makes itself just what it wills to be, and makes all that befalls seem to itself what it wills." [3] This supremacy and adequacy of the inner governing self is a central tenet in the Emperor's philosophy, as it was in Stoicism itself throughout its history. On this vital point Christianity, as represented by St. Augustine, broke with the great ethical tradition that was in other ways so congenial. It was Pelagius who still defended the Stoic concept of virtue as won, if at all, by the individual's own effort. To no thought does Marcus more frequently return than to that of the reverence [4] which is due to the soul, "the god and deity within," [5] "king and law-giver," [6] "the most precious organ we possess, whereby, if we so will, we attain to faith and honor and truth and law," [7] "which keeps a man unsoiled by pleasure, invulnerable by pain, a combatant in the greatest of all combats, which is the mastery of passion, steeped in justice to the core, and with his whole heart welcoming all that befalls him as his portion." [8] Salvation for each man thus lies entirely within the com-

[1] II. 5. [2] II. 1. [3] VI. 8. [4] III. 9. [5] V. 10. [6] IV. 12. [7] X. 13. [8] III. 4.

petence of his own reason and will. The phrase "upright, not uprighted," [1] occurs twice; the thought itself is pervasive.

Two dates in the history of Stoicism are of great interest and significance. Its first appearance at Athens was coincident with the partial and short-lived realization of a possible political unity of mankind in the empire of Alexander the Great. Its introduction at Rome came at the time when the juristic and administrative genius of the Republic was beginning to put into practicable form the idea of a single imperial nationality for all the diverse peoples under its sway. For the Stoic the presence in each man of the divine faculty of reason at once linked him with Deity and to his fellow men. All human beings became thereby citizens of a world city or state, and virtue, whose only means of expression was action, became preëminently social. No individual could rightly live unto himself alone. "We are made for co-operation, like the feet, the hands, the eyelids, the upper and lower rows of teeth." [2] Again and again Marcus develops this theme. The obligation to direct all action to a social end is constantly stressed. "No outer claimant—not popular applause, nor power, nor wealth, nor self-indulgence—may compete with the authorizations of the social reason." [3] And as right action follows upon the understanding of the nature and nobility of good and the nature and meanness of evil, so wrong-doing is the result of men's not knowing what is good and what is evil.[4] "Men exist for one another. Teach them,

[1] III. 5; VII. 12. [2] II. 1. [3] III. 6. [4] II. 1; VIII. 14.

then, or bear with them." [1] To ignorance and folly rather than to deliberate wrongdoing is due that separation from the beneficent life of the universe which we call wickedness. "If the fault rests with you, why do it? If with another, with what do you find fault? The atoms or the gods? Either is idiocy. Find fault with nobody. If you can, set the doer right; if that is impossible, at least set the thing right; if even that cannot be, to what purpose is your fault-finding? For everything must have some purpose." [2]

But this imperative social action, though performed in the spirit of self-sacrifice and even of affection, must be, as a rule, its own reward. Marcus fills the first book of his meditations, it is true, with pleasant memories of high-minded and engaging personalities. It is a charming circle of relatives, friends, and companions that is there described. But the scrupulous exercise of authority is apt to be felt as irksome even by those for whom the ruler has "striven, prayed, and thought." [3] "Well-doing, ill-report—a king's portion," [4] even if the monarch conscientiously tries to make effective "the conception of an equal commonwealth based on equality of right and equality of speech, and of imperial rule respecting first and foremost the liberty of the subject." [5] Should one, then, repine or lose serenity? "Does the eye demand a recompense for seeing, or the feet for walking?" [6] Is not the true man "like the vine that bears a cluster, and, having once borne its proper fruit, seeks no further recompense . . . but passes on to the bearing of clusters for the next sea-

[1] VIII. 59. [2] VIII. 17. [3] X. 36. [4] VII. 36. [5] I. 14. [6] IX. 42.

son?" [1] One who comprehends the majestic whole of which he is an integral and active part must needs "find the joy of life in heaping good on good so close that not a chink is left between." [2]

The practice of virtue, then, must not be left contingent upon any hope of external appreciation in this world. May we, however, look forward to recognition in a life beyond the grave? Marcus neither seeks nor knows such encouragement. For him

> "When that which drew from out the boundless deep
> Turns again home,"

there follows, either at once or presently, through loss of personal being, re-absorption into that imperishable world-soul, kinship with which gives to man's life all the significance that it has. Virtue, then, must be disinterested, must base itself upon a high self-respect, must be content with its own commendation. For if "the god within be kept pure and erect, as though at any moment liable to be reclaimed," [3] this brief span of mortal existence, this moment between two eternities, may yet be lived "as on a mountain," [4] even when one is surrounded by senseless tumult and strife, and be qualitatively in the way of perfection. For no one but one's self has power to hinder. "The perfecting of life is a power residing in the soul, realized by indifference towards things indifferent." [5] "The view taken is everything; and that rests with yourself. Disown the view, at will; and behold, the headland rounded, there is calm—still waters and a waveless

[1] V. 6. [2] XII. 29. [3] III. 12. [4] X. 15. [5] XI. 16.

bay." [1] The world pursues riches and pleasure; it shuns pain and poverty. Is the appraisal justified? No; for these things and the like "fall to the good and bad indifferently, and neither ennoble nor demean. The inference is that they are neither good nor evil." [2] There is thus an inner citadel into which one may retire at will and be impregnable to assault from without. In that charmed atmosphere, which no person and no thing has power to change except with our own connivance, the subtle alchemy of the judgment and the will converts apparent obstacles into fresh sources of vigor, as a blazing fire consumes a mass of material that would have choked a feeble flame. [3] How fortunate, then, to be able to say "this thing might have happened to anyone, but not everyone could have endured without a pang." [4]

In this struggle to keep the soul inviolate, may we expect the aid of the gods? Yes, if we show ourselves worthy of it.

"Our wills are ours, to make them Thine." [5]

Of this Marcus was no less certain than was Tennyson. Now Stoicism prided itself upon its logical consistency, and in strict logic the dignity of man was contingent upon his kinship with the divine. But what if the seemingly abundant proofs of a providential order are, after all, deceptive? If, after all, the world is really a random and ungoverned medley? Confronted by this possibility, Marcus falls back upon that unbending

[1] XII. 22.
[2] II. 11.
[3] IV. 1; V. 20.
[4] IV. 49.
[5] *In Memoriam*, Prelude.

self-respect which is so characteristic of the true Stoic. "If a chaos uncontrolled, be thankful that amid the wild waters you have within yourself an Inner governing mind. If the waves sweep you away, let them sweep flesh, breath, and poor mortality; the mind they shall never sweep." [1] Certainly an illogical position, but nevertheless magnificent!

But much as we may admire the austerity of Marcus' philosophy, it is the simplicity and sweetness of his disposition that have won the heart of all who have come to know him. Stoicism distrusted emotion. Here is a Stoic who prizes it, who shrinks from the loneliness of the heights of power on which he lived. "Put yourself in harmony with the things among which your lot is cast; love those with whom you have your portion with a true love." [2] "Man is made for kindness, and whenever he does an act of kindness or otherwise helps forward the common good, he thereby fulfills the law of his being." [3] "When you wish to cheer your spirits, consider the excellences of those about you—one so effective, another so unassuming, another so open-handed, and so on and so on. Nothing is more cheering than exemplifications of virtue in the characters of those about us. We should keep them always ready to hand." [4]

The thoughtful reader will feel the justice of Matthew Arnold's estimate of Marcus Aurelius as "one of those consoling and hope-inspiring marks which stand forever to remind our weak and easily discouraged race how high human goodness and perseverance have once

[1] XII. 14. [2] VI. 39. [3] IX. 42. [4] VI. 48.

been carried, and may be carried again." [1] Scrupulous in thought, speech, and action, Marcus insists on defining precisely each object of perception. He will allow himself no illusion, however attractive, no feeling that is out of harmony with the judgment of his reasoning faculty. He would fain walk with God. The way is hard, the strain often great. But his resolve never really wavers, and, in the last analysis, he relies upon himself, upon the deity within.

NELSON GLENN MCCREA.

[1] "Marcus Aurelius" in *Essays in Criticism* (Macmillan & Co., 1883), p. 354.

The translation used is by Gerald H. Rendall, M.A., Litt.D., formerly Head Master of Charterhouse and published in the Golden Treasury Series, Macmillan & Co., London.

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus

to Himself

# Marcus Aurelius Antoninus
## To Himself

### BOOK I

*μέμνησο τῶν δογμάτων*

From my grandfather Verus, integrity and good 1
temper.

From the reputation and the memory of my 2
father, self-respect and manliness.

From my mother, to be god-fearing and generous; 3
to put away malice in thought, as well as malice in deed; to be simple in all my ways, and to keep clear of the fashions of wealth.

Thanks to my great-grandfather, I did not attend 4
public lectures, but kept to good masters at home, and learned that money so given is money well spent.

From my tutor, not to back the Greens or the 5
Blues, the Big Shields or Little Shields: to work hard, to want little, and to wait upon myself; to mind my own business, and to scout slander.

From Diognetus, to be in earnest; to distrust 6
sorcerers and wizards, and stories of spells or exorcisms; contempt for quail-fighting or gambling; belief in free speaking; the taste for philosophy, for the discourses of Bacchius, and later of Tandasis and Marcianus; for writing essays; for trying the

plank bed and the skin, and the other insignia of discipleship.

7 From Rusticus, the idea of amendment of life, and attention to character: to have done with flights of style, themes on First principles, discourses upon morals, fancy sketches of the Sage, or portraits of the virtuous liver; to drop rhetoric and poetry and fine talk; not to parade the house in full garb, or other such affectations; to keep my letters simple, like his own from Sinuessa to my mother; to be cordial and conciliatory to any one who had been cross or out of temper, as soon as they made an advance; to read with precision, and not rest satisfied with vague general views; and not to say yes to every glib talker. He introduced me to the memoirs of Epictetus, with a copy from his own stores.

8 From Apollonius, to be my own master, and stake nothing on chance; never, for one instant, to lose sight of reason; in paroxysms of pain, at a child's death, or in bouts of illness, to keep always the same. His example was a living proof, how the most high-strung can unbend: he was a model of patience in explanation; and visibly one who made the least of his own insight and skill in philosophic exposition; he taught me how to receive favours from friends, without loss of dignity or lack of grace.

9 From Sextus, kindliness; and the model of a well-ordered household; the idea of life in conformity with nature; dignity without affectation; sympathetic concern for friends; tolerance for the simple and unlettered; the universal cordiality, which made

his society more agreeable than any flattery, while never for a moment failing to command respect; his steady intuition for discerning and combining the principles essential to right living, restraining every expression of anger or emotion, and keeping each affection within emotional control. In his commendation there was no loudness, and about his learning no parade.

From Alexander the grammarian, to be uncen- 10
sorious; not to be carping and severe upon lapses of grammar or idiom or phrase, but dexterously to supply the proper expression, by way of rejoinder or corroboration, or discussion of the matter rather than the language, or some other form of graceful reminder.

From Fronto, to understand that jealousy and 11
doubleness and insincerity are characteristic of the tyrant, and that Patricians, as we call them, only too often fail in natural affection.

From Alexander the Platonist, seldom and only 12
when driven to it, to say or write, "I have no time"; and not to indulge the tendency to cry off from duties arising out of our natural relations with those about us, on the pretext of press of business.

From Catulus, never to slight a friend's grievance, 13
even though it happens to be unreasonable, but to try and restore him to good humour; to be hearty in praise of my teachers, as in the memoirs of Domitius and Athenodotus; and genuinely fond of my children.

From my brother Verus, love of belongings, love 14
of truth, and love of justice; my knowledge of

Thrasea, Helvidius, Cato, Dion, and Brutus; and the conception of an equal commonwealth based on equality of right and equality of speech, and of imperial rule respecting first and foremost the liberty of the subject. From him too I learned harmonious well attuned devotion to philosophy; unselfishness and generosity; hopefulness, and belief in friends' affection; outspokenness in disapproval, and not to leave friends to conjecture what one wanted or did not want, but to be plain with them.

15 From Maximus, self-mastery and singleness of aim; cheeriness in sickness or other visitations; dignity tempered with affability; the prompt performance of appointed tasks. Every one believed that what he said he thought, and that what he did was done honestly. Nothing could dazzle, and nothing daunt him; there was no pressing forward, no hanging back, no hesitation; no ogling and fawning on one hand, or frets and frowns on the other. Kind, generous, and genuine, he gave one the impression of goodness undeviating and even incorruptible. No one ever felt him patronising, yet no one could have esteemed himself his better; so gracious was his manner.

16 From my father I learned gentleness, and unshaken adherence to judgments deliberately formed; indifference to outward show and compliment; industry and assiduity; an ear open to all suggestions for the public weal; recognition inflexibly proportioned to desert; the tact that knew when to insist and when to relax; chaste habits and disinterested

aims. His friends had free leave to forego the imperial table, or miss attendance in his suite, and he took no umbrage at those who were detained on various calls. At the councilboard he pushed inquiries pertinaciously, where others would have held their hand, content with first impressions. His loyalty to friends was free from fickleness or extravagance. He rose to the occasion, always, with a smile. To be forewarned was with him to be forearmed, even in trifles, without ado. Personal applause or flattery of any kind he kept in check. Vigilant in providing for imperial needs, he husbanded his resources, and put up with the inevitable grumbling. In his relations with the gods he was not superstitious; while with men, he neither courted popularity nor pandered to the mob, but was in all points sober and safe, distrusting flash or novelty. The luxuries which tend to refine life, and of which fortune is so lavish, he enjoyed at once modestly and unfeignedly; if there, he partook unaffectedly, if absent, he did not feel the lack. No one could charge him with crotchets or vulgarity or pedantry, or fail to recognise the manly ripeness and maturity that rose above flattery, and knew how to govern himself as well as others. He did honour to all true philosophers; to the rest he was civil, but kept his distance all the same. His manner was friendly; gracious, but not excessive. In attention to the body he hit the happy mean: there was no hugging of life, no petting himself, and on the other hand no undue neglect; his wise self-management made him

almost independent of doctoring, medicines, or salves. He was forward and generous in recognising talent, in rhetoric for instance or jurisprudence of history, or any other subject; and eager to assist any to shine in the sphere of their choice. Sound Roman through and through, he never studied appearances. Free from caprice or humours, he kept constant to the same places and the same things. After paroxysms of headache, he was back fresh and vigorous at his usual tasks. His official secrets were few, the rare and occasional exceptions being solely matters of state. In his shows, his public works, his donatives and so forth, discernment and moderation were the rule; always with an eye to the actual need, rather than to gain popularity. He never bathed at odd hours, or took a passion for building; never set up for a table connoisseur, an expert on textures and tints, or an authority on good looks. His dress came from Lorium where his country house was, and was generally of Lanuvian wool. His treatment of the apologetic tax-collector at Tusculum is a good sample of his manner. There was nothing fractious about him, no black looks or fits: he never forced things, as one says, 'past sweating point'; but was invariably rational and discriminating—giving judgments leisurely, calm, suitable, vigorous, and consistent. One might fairly apply to him what is recorded of Socrates, that he could either enjoy or leave things which most people find themselves too weak to abstain from, and too self-indulgent to enjoy. Strength, and endurance, with sobriety in

both, make up perfection, and are the qualities that win, as the illness of Maximus showed.

From the gods—good grandsires, good parents, 17
a good sister, good teachers; good associates, kinsmen, friends, good almost every one: and that I did not hastily fall out with any of them, though my natural disposition might easily enough have betrayed me into it; but by the goodness of the gods circumstances never conspired to put me to the test. Thanks to the gods that I was removed when I was, from the side of my grandfather's mistress; that I kept the flower of my youth; that I did not force my virility, but patiently bided my time. That in my imperial father I found a chief, who purged me of conceit, and brought me up to the idea, that court life need not entail men-at-arms or brocaded robes or flambeaux or statues or such like pomp; but that a prince may contract his state to the style of a private citizen, without thereby demeaning himself or relaxing imperial and representative position. The gods granted me a brother, whose influence stimulated me to make the most of my powers, while his respect and affection gave me new heart; children of good parts, and free from bodily deformities. They saved me from succeeding too well with rhetoric and poetry and the rest, in which I might have become absorbed, had I found it all smooth running. Thanks to them, I advanced my tutors betimes to the position which they had at heart, and did not put them off with the hope that they were still young enough to wait: I came to

know Apollonius, Rusticus, and Maximus; and got clear and rooted impressions of what is meant by living in accordance with nature. The gods have done their part: their gifts, their aid, their inspirations have not been wanting to help me to realise the life conformed to nature; that I still fall short of it is my own fault, and comes if not heeding the reminders, I may almost say the dictates of the gods. Thanks to them, my physical strength has stood the strain: I never went near Benedicta or Theodotus, and for later love affairs was none the worse. Though often vexed with Rusticus, I did not go to extremes that I might have repented. Though my mother was destined to die young, at least her latest years were spent with me. When I wanted to help a case of poverty or need, I was never told that I had no funds for the purpose; while I have never found myself in the like case of receiving charity from some one else. Thanks too for such a wife, so docile, so affectionate, so simple: for abundance of good tutors for my children: for help vouchsafed in dreams, more particularly for relief from bloodspitting and dizziness: and for the Caietan's response 'That depends on you.' Thanks too that, in spite of my ardour for philosophy, I did not fall into the hands of a professor, or sit poring over essays or syllogisms, or become engrossed in scientific speculation. Thanks be to the gods and destiny.

*Among the Quadi, by the Gran.*

# BOOK II

ὁ ἀνεξέταστος βίος ἀβίωτος—PLATO

WHEN you wake, say to yourself—To-day I shall 1
encounter meddling, ingratitude, violence, cunning, jealousy, self-seeking; all of them the results of men not knowing what is good and what is evil. But seeing that I have beheld the nature and nobility of good, and the nature and meanness of evil, and the nature of the sinner, who is my brother, participating not indeed in the same flesh and blood, but in the same mind and partnership with the divine, I cannot be injured by any of them; for no man can involve me in what demeans. Neither can I be angry with my brother, or quarrel with him; for we are made for co-operation, like the feet, the hands, the eyelids, the upper and the lower rows of teeth. To thwart one another is contrary to nature; and one form of thwarting is resentment and estrangement.

Flesh, breath, and the Inner Self—that is all. 2
Good-bye, my books! strain after them no more; they are not your portion. As in the near presence of death, despise poor flesh—this refuse of blood and bones, this web and tissue of nerves and veins and arteries. Breath too! what is it? a puff of wind, never the same, but every moment exhaling, and again inhaled. Last comes the Inner Self—on that

stake all: you are an old man; do not let it be a slave any longer, pulled puppet-like by self-seeking impulse; nor quarrel with destiny, either by chafing at the present, or bemoaning the future.

3 Providence pervades god's world. The workings of chance are part of nature, the web and woof of the dispositions of providence. From providence flows all; and side by side with it is necessity and the advantage of the Universe, of which you are a part. To every part of nature that which Nature brings, and which helps towards its conservation, is good. The conservation of the world-order depends not only on the changes of the elements, but also on those of the compounded wholes. Be content with what you have, find there your principles of life. No more of thirsting after books, that you may die not murmuring but in serenity, truly and heartily grateful to the gods.

4 Think how long you have gone on postponing, how often the gods have granted days of grace, which you have failed to use. It is high time to give heed to the order of which you are a part, and to the great disposer, of whom your being is an effluence; and to perceive that the limit of your time is circumscribed; use it to gain the unclouded calm, or 'twill be gone, and nevermore within your power.

5 Every hour staunchly, as a Roman and a man, resolve to do the work in hand, with scrupulous and unaffected dignity, affectionately, freely, justly; securing respite for yourself from all other intruding regards. And this you will secure, if you perform

each task as though it were your last, free from all waywardness, from passions that turn their back on reason, from insincerity, self-love, and discontent with destiny. See how few things a man need hold fast, to secure the smooth flow of a godly life—for the gods will require nothing more of him who keeps true to these.

Is violence done you? Then do not violence to 6
thyself, my soul. Not for long will thy day for self-reverence be. Each lives but once; thy life is all but finished, and still instead of respecting thyself alone, thou dost stake thy fortunes upon the souls of others.

Claims from without distract you. Then give 7
yourself some respite from the taskwork of new good, and have done with the restless whirl. Yet even so beware you lose not singleness of aim; there are the babblers, tired of action, and with no fixed aim to be the mark of each endeavour, yes, and each regard.

It were hard to find a man distempered by not 8
understanding what is passing in another's soul; but those who do not intelligently follow the motions of their own, cannot but be in a distemper.

Ever bear in mind what Nature is at large, what 9
my own nature is, how this stands to that, how small a portion of how great a whole, and further, that no man can prevent you from keeping act and word always accordant with that nature of which you are a part.

In comparing sins—so far as they admit of general 10
comparison—Theophrastus sagely observes that sins

of desire are more heinous than sins of passion. For passion is an estrangement from reason, accompanied by sense of pain and inward constriction; but sins of desire, in which pleasure gets the better of us, imply more of feminine incontinence. And surely it is right and philosophical to say that sinning with pleasure is more culpable than sinning with pain. The latter is like acting under provocation, and being driven into passion by pain: the former is a spontaneous impulse towards wrong, driving one to satisfaction of desire.

11 Whatever you do or say or think, it is in your power, remember, to take leave of life. In departing from this world, if indeed there are gods, there is nothing to be afraid of; for gods will not let you fall into evil. But if there are no gods, or if they do not concern themselves with men, why live on in a world devoid of gods, or devoid of providence? But there do exist gods, who do concern themselves with men. And they have put it wholly in the power of man not to fall into any true evil. Were there real evil in what remains in store, against that too they would have provided, putting within every man's reach power of immunity. But how can that, which does not make a man worse, make his life worse? Nature could never have made the oversight, either unknowingly or yet knowingly, through inability to guard against it or set it right. Nature could not, either through lack of power or lack of skill, have made such a blunder as to let good and evil indifferently befall the good and bad indiscriminately. Yet

death and life, good report and evil report, pain and pleasure, riches and poverty, and all such things fall to the good and bad indifferently, and neither ennoble nor demean. The inference is that they are neither good nor evil.

12 By mind-power we apprehend how quickly all things vanish, bodies in the material world, their memories in the lapse of time; we understand the nature of all things of sense, particularly those which decoy us with the bait of pleasure, or terrify us with the threat of pain, or are dinned into our ears by self-conceit; how cheap they are and despicable, filthy, perishable, dead. Mind sees the worth of those, whose views and voices bestow repute; it teaches the nature of death, and shows that any one who looks it fairly in the face, and mentally analyses the idea into the impressions which it contains, will come to regard it simply as an act of nature; and none but a child is terrified at that. Nay, and not merely an act of nature, but for nature's good. By mind we learn how man has touch with god, and with what part of his being, and how, when this takes place, the said part is affected.

13 Nothing is more disheartening than the weary round of spying out everything, probing (as Pindar says) 'the depths of earth,' guessing and prying at the secrets of our neighbours' souls, instead of realising that it is enough to keep solely to the god within, and to serve him with all honesty; and our service to god is to keep him pure from passion, and waywardness, and discontent with that which comes

from gods or men. The gods' works command respect, by virtue of their excellence; the works of men love, by virtue of the bond of brotherhood; and sometimes withal pity, by reason of their ignorance of good and evil, a blindness as disabling as that which obliterates the distinction between black and white.

14 Though you live three thousand years, ay or three million, no man, remember, can lose another life than that which he now lives, or live another than that which he now loses. The longest and the shortest come to the same thing. The present is the same for all (even though the loss be not the same); what you lose or win, is just the flying moment. A man cannot be losing either past or future—how can he be deprived of that which is not his? Remember then two things—first, that all things from all eternity are of one and the same recurrent form, and that it makes no difference whether a man watches the same show for a hundred years, or for two hundred, or for an infinity; secondly, that the loss of the longest-lived and the shortest is one and the same. It is the present only of which a man can be deprived, that and that only being his, and what is not his he cannot lose.

15 The view taken is everything. The objections urged against Monimus the Cynic are obvious: but so too is the value of the *dictum*, if one accepts the gist of it, so far as it is true.

16 Man's soul does violence to itself, first and foremost when it makes itself, so far as it can, a kind of

tumour and excrescence on the universe; any chafing against the order of things is a rebellion against nature, whose unity includes the various natures of the several parts. And again, secondly, when it estranges itself, or actively opposes another to his hurt, as happens in fits of anger. Thirdly, there is self-violence, when it succumbs to pleasure or to pain. Fourthly, when it plays false, by feigned and untrue act or word. Fifthly, when in action or endeavour it becomes aimless and works at random and unintelligently, for even our least actions must have reference to an end; and the end of rational beings is, to walk as followers of the reason and the ordinance of the city and commonwealth most high.

In man's life, time is but a moment; being, a flux; 17
sense is dim; the material frame corruptible; soul, an eddy of breath: fortune a thing inscrutable, and fame precarious. In brief, things of the body are but a stream that flows, things of the soul a dream and vapour; life, a warfare and a sojourning; and after-fame, oblivion. What then can direct our goings? One thing and one alone, philosophy; which is, to keep the deity within inviolate and free from scathe, superior to pleasures and to pains, doing nothing at random, nothing falsely or disingenuously, and lacking for naught, whatever others do or leave undone; accepting the apportioned lot, as coming from the same source as man himself; and finally, in all serenity awaiting death, the natural dissolution of the elements of which each creature is compounded. And if the component elements have

nought to fear in the continuous change from form to form, why should one eye askance the change and dissolution of the whole? It is of nature; and nature knows no evil.

*At Carnuntum.*

# BOOK III

## DEO PARERE LIBERTAS

We must take into account, not only that each 1
day consumes so much of life, and leaves so much less behind, but also that, even if life is prolonged, there remains the uncertainty whether the understanding will still retain discernment and that power of vision which gives insight into things divine and human. Dotage may set in, involving no failure of respiration, nutrition, impression, impulse, or the like; but premature decay of use of powers, of nice exactitude in calculating duties, of just correlation of them as a whole, of clear perception whether the time has come to quit the scene, and such like criteria of active and well-ordered intelligence. We must press forward then, not only because each day is one step nearer death, but also because apprehension and intelligence may prematurely fail.

Watch well the grace and charm, that belong even 2
to the consequents of nature's work. The cracks for instance and crevices in bread-crust, though in a sense flaws in the baking, yet have a fitness of their own and a special stimulus to tickle the appetite. Figs again, just at perfection, gape. In ripe olives the very nearness of decay adds its own beauty to the fruit. The bending ears of corn, the lion's scowl, the foam that drips from the wild boar's

mouth, and many other things, though in themselves far from beautiful, yet looked at as consequents on nature's handiwork, add new beauty and appeal to the soul, so that if only one attains deeper feeling and insight for the workings of the universe, almost everything, even in its consequents and accidents, seems to contribute some charm of its own. Thus the actual jaws of living beasts will be not less picturesque than the imitations produced by artists and sculptors. The old woman and the old man will have an ideal loveliness, as youth its ravishing charm, made visible to eyes that have the skill. Such things will not appeal to all, but will strike him only who is in harmony with nature and her sincere familiar.

3 Hippocrates cured many sick, but himself fell sick and died. The Chaldeans foretold many deaths, but fate overtook them too. Alexander, Pompey, Julius Cæsar, razed city after city to the ground, and cut thousands upon thousands to pieces, horse and foot, upon the field of battle, but for them too came the hour of departure. Heraclitus after all his speculations on the conflagration of the universe, was water-logged with dropsy, and died in a plaster of cow dung. Democritus was killed by vermin; and Socrates by vermin of another kind. What does it all come to? This. You embark, you make life's voyage, you come to port: step out. If for another life, there are gods everywhere, there as here. If out of all sensation, then pains and pleasures will solicit you no more, and you will drudge no

more for the carnal shell, which is so unworthy of its ministering servant. For the spirit is mind and god, the body refuse clay.

Do not waste what is left of life in regarding 4
other men, except when bent upon some unselfish gain. Why miss opportunities for action by thus persistently regarding what so-and-so is doing and why, what he is saying or thinking or planning, or anything else that dazes and distracts you from allegiance to your Inner Self? In the train of your regards, shun wayward random thoughts, and, above all, meddling and ill-nature; limit yourself habitually to such regards, that if suddenly asked 'What is in your thoughts now?' you could tell at once the candid and unhesitating truth—a direct plain proof, that all your thoughts were simple and in charity, such as befit a social being, who eschews voluptuous or even self-indulgent fancies, or jealousy of any kind, or malice and suspicion, or any other mood which you would blush to own. A man so minded, and committed finally to the pursuit of virtue, is indeed a priest and minister of gods, true to that inward and implanted power, which keeps a man unsoiled by pleasure, invulnerable by pain, free from all touch of arrogance, innocent of all baseness, a combatant in the greatest of all combats, which is the mastery of passion, steeped in justice to the core, and with his whole heart welcoming all that befalls him as his portion: seldom, and only in view of some large unselfish gain, does he regard what any other says or does or thinks. In action his own

conduct is his sole concern, and he realises without a break the web of his own destiny; action he makes high, convinced that destiny is good; for the man's apportioned lot sweeps on with the world's sweep. He forgets not his bond of brotherhood with every rational creature; nor that the law of man's nature implies concern for all men: and that he must not hold by the opinion of the world, but of those only who live conformably to nature. He bears steadily in mind what manner of men they are who do not so live, and at home and abroad, by night and by day, what kind of company they keep; nor can he take account of such men's praise, when they do not even please or satisfy themselves.

5 Let action be willing, disinterested, well-advised, ungrudging; thought modest and unpretentious. No overtalking and no overdoing. Give the god within the control of what you are—a living man, full-aged, a citizen, a Roman, an Imperator; you have held the van; you are as one who waits for the retreat from life to sound, ready for the march, needing not oath nor witness. Herein is the smile of gladness, of self-completeness without others' aid, and without the peace which is in others' gift. Upright, not uprighted.

6 Does man's life offer anything higher than justice, truth, wisdom, and courage, in a word, than the understanding at peace with itself in conforming action to the law of reason, at peace with destiny in all apportionments that lie beyond its own control? If you see something higher still, turn to it,

say I, with your whole heart, and have joy of your goodly find. But if there appear nothing higher than the implanted deity within, which gives the impulses their mandate, which scrutinises the impressions, which (in the words of Socrates) is weaned from the affections of sense, which takes its mandate from the gods, and concerns itself for men; and if all else proves mean and cheap in comparison with this, give no footing to any rival attraction or seduction, which will preclude you from the undistracted cultivation of your own peculiar good. No outer claimant—not popular applause, nor power, nor wealth, nor self-indulgence—may compete with the authorisations of the social reason. For a moment they may seem to harmonise, but suddenly they take the mastery, and sweep you from your moorings. I say then, simply and freely, choose the highest and hold it fast. The highest is that in which lies true advantage. If your advantage as a reasoning being, make sure of it; if only as a living thing, so state the case, not bolstering your judgment by any self-conceit, only be sure there lurks no error in your scrutiny.

Esteem nothing an advantage, which will compel 7
you to break faith, to forfeit self-respect, to suspect or hate or execrate another, to play false, to desire anything which requires screens or veils. He who is loyal to his own indwelling mind and god, and a willing votary of that inward grace, makes no scene, heaves no sighs, needs not a wilderness nor yet a crowd. The best is his, the life that neither seeks

nor shuns. Whether his soul in its material shell remains at his disposal for a longer or a shorter space, he cares not a whit. When it is time for him to take his leave, he is as ready to go his way as to engage in any other seemly or self-respecting act; careful of one thing only, that while life shall last, his understanding shall never disown the relation of a being possessed of mind and social aim.

8 In the understanding thoroughly purged and chastened, there is no place for ulcerous sore or fester. Destiny cannot cut short the man's career still incomplete, like an actor quitting the stage before the piece is finished and played out. He does not cringe nor brag, he does not lean nor yet stand off, he is accountable to none and yet has no concealments.

9 Treat reverently your assumptive faculty: by it and it alone is your Inner Self secured against assumptions not in harmony with nature and with the constitution of a rational creature. It is our warranty for mental circumspection, for community with men, and for the walk with gods.

10 Casting all else away, hold fast these few verities. A man, remember, lives only in the present, this passing moment; all else is life outlived, or yet undisclosed. Man's life has but a tiny span, tiny as the corner of earth on which he lives, short as fame's longest tenure, handed along the line of short-lived mortals, who do not even know themselves, far less the dead of long ago.

11 To these add one injunction more. Always define and outline carefully the object of perception,

so as to realise its naked substance, to discriminate its self from its surroundings, to master its specific attributes, the elements of which it is composed and into which it will be resolved. Nothing so emancipates the mind, as the power of scientifically testing everything that comes into our life, of looking into it and gathering the class and order to which each belongs, the special use which it subserves, its value to the universe, its value in particular to man as citizen and member of that supreme world-city, of which all other cities are as households. What is the object, ask, which now produces the given impression upon me? of what is it compounded? how long has it to last? on what virtue does it make demand? gentleness, courage, truth, good faith, simplicity, self-help, or what? In each case say, This comes from god: or, This is part of the co-ordination, the concatenating web, the concurrence of destiny: or, This is from one who is of the same stock and kind and fellowship as I, but who is ignorant of his true relation to nature; I am not ignorant, and therefore in accordance with nature's law of fellowship I treat him kindly and justly; though at the same time in things relative I strive to hit their proper worth.

If you put to use the present, earnestly, vigor- 12
ously and considerately following the law of reason: if, careless of by-gains, you keep your god within pure and erect, as though at any moment liable to be re-claimed; if, waiting for nothing and shunning nothing, you keep your being whole, conforming

present action to nature's law, and content with even truth of word and utterance, then you will be in the way of perfection. And none has power to hinder.

13 As surgeons keep their instruments and knives at hand for sudden calls upon their skill, keep you your principles ever ready to test things divine and human, in every act however trifling remembering the mutual bond between the two. No human act can be right without co-reference to the divine, nor conversely.

14 Be not misguided any more: you will not now re-read your *Memorabilia*, nor your deeds of ancient Rome and Greece, nor the essays and extracts which you garnered for old age. No, push forward to the end, fling empty hopes away, and as you care for self, to your own rescue, while you yet may.

15 They little know the full meaning of to steal, to sow, to buy, to be at peace, to see the right course: such seeing needs another organ than the eye.

16 Body, soul, mind, these three: to the body belong sensations, to the soul impulses, to the mind principles. The impressions of sense we share with cattle of the field: the pulls of impulse with brute beasts, with catamites, with Phalaris, or Nero: and mind is still the guide into the way of duty, even for the atheist, the traitor, and for those who lock the door for sin. Well then, if all else is shared, the good man's one distinction is to welcome gladly all that falls within the web of destiny; to keep the god implanted in his breast unsoiled, and unperturbed

by any tumult of impressions, keeping his watch serene, a seemly follower of god, not false to truth in utterance, or to justice in act. Though the whole world misdoubt him because his life is simple, self-respecting, and cheerful, he is angered with no man, and does not turn aside from the path that leads to his life's goal, which at the last he must attain pure and peaceful and ready to depart, in unrebellious harmony with his appointed portion.

# BOOK IV

ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ γένος ἐσμέν—CLEANTHES

πάντα θεῶν μεστὰ καὶ δαιμόνων—EPICTETUS

1 WHEN the sovereign power within is true to nature, it stands ready to adjust itself to every possibility and every chance that may befall. It does not set its affections on any determinate material, but keeps each impulse and preference conditional and subject to reservation. Obstacles encountered it converts into material for itself, just as fire lays hold of things on top of it, which would have choked a feeble light; for a blaze of fire at once assimilates all that is heaped on, consumes it, and derives new vigour from the process.

2 Let no act be performed at random, or without full philosophic consideration.

3 Men seek retirement in country house, on shore or hill; and you too know full well what that yearning means. Surely a very simple wish; for at what hour you will, you can retire into yourself. Nowhere can man find retirement more peaceful and untroubled than in his own soul; specially he who hath such stores within, that at a glance he straightway finds himself lapped in ease; meaning by ease good order in the soul, this and nothing else. Ever and anon grant yourself this retirement, and so renew

yourself. Have at command thoughts, brief and elemental, yet effectual to shut out the court and all its ways, and to send you back unchafing to the tasks to which you must return. What is it chafes you? Men's evil-doing? Find reassurance in the tenet, that rational beings exist for one another, that forbearance is a part of justice, that wrong-doing is involuntary, and think of all the feuds, suspicions, hates and brawls, that ere now lie stretched in ashes; think, and be at rest. Or is it the portion assigned you in the universe, at which you chafe? Refresh yourself with the alternative—either a foreseeing providence, or blind atoms—and all the abounding proofs that the world is as it were a city. Or is it bodily troubles that assail? You have but to realise that when once the understanding is secure of itself and conscious of its own prerogative, it has no more part in the motions of the *pneuma*,[1] smooth or rough, and to rest in the creed to which you hold regarding pain and pleasure. Or does some bubble of fame torment you? Then fix your gaze on swift oblivion, on the gulf of infinity this way and that, on the empty rattle of plaudits and the fickle accident of show applause, on the narrow range within which you are circumscribed. The whole earth is but a point, your habitation but a tiny nook thereon: and on the earth how many are there who will praise you, and what are they worth? Well then, remember to retire within that little field[2] of self.

[1] *I. e.* The vital *pneuma* of the physical organism. See v. 26, vi. 15, x. 8.
[2] See x. 23, note.

Above all do not strain or strive, but be free, and look at things as a man, as a human being, as a citizen, as of mortal make. Foremost among the maxims to which you can bend your glance, be these two—first, things cannot touch the soul, but stand without it stationary; tumult can arise only from views within ourselves: secondly, all things you see, in a moment change and will be no more; ay, think of all the changes in which you have yourself borne part. The world is a moving shift; life a succession of views.

4 If the mind-element is common to us all, so likewise is that reason which makes us rational; and therefore too that reason, which bids us do or leave undone; and therefore the world-law; therefore we are fellow-citizens, and share a common citizenship; and the world is as it were a city. What other citizenship is common to the whole of humankind? From thence, even from this common citizenship, comes our franchise—mind, reason, and law. If not, whence indeed? For just as the earthy element in me is derived from earth, the watery from another element, breath from a given source, and again the hot and igneous from its own proper source—for nothing comes from nothing, or can pass into nothing—so assuredly the mind-element has likewise its own origin.

5 Death, like birth, is a revelation of nature; a composition of elements and answering dissolution. There is nothing in it to put us out of countenance. It is in consonance with the nature of a being pos-

sessed of mind, it does not contradict the reason of his constitution.

That from such and such causes given effects 6
result is inevitable; he who would not have it so, would have the fig-tree yield no juice. As for him, remember that in a trice you and he will both be dead; soon not even your names will survive.

Get rid of the assumption, and therewith you 7
get rid of the sense 'I am an injured man'; get rid of the sense of injury, you get rid of the injury itself.

What does not make the man himself worse, does 8
not make his life worse either, nor injure him, without or within.

It is a necessity, nature's good demands it. 9

'All that happens, happens aright.' Watch closely, 10
you will find it so. Not merely in the order of events, but by scale of right, as though some power apportions all according to worth. Watch on then, as you have begun; in all that you do, let goodness go with the doing—goodness in the strict meaning of the word. In every action make sure of this.

Do not take the views adopted by him who does 11
the wrong, nor yet those he would have you adopt; just look at facts, as they truly are.

Two rules of readiness; be ready, first, to do just 12
that which reason, your king and lawgiver, suggests for the help of men, and, secondly, be ready to change your course, should some one after all correct and convert you out of your conceit. Only the conversion must be due to some convincing consideration,

such as justice or public gain, and the appeal must be of that order only, not apparent pleasure or popularity.

13 Have you reason?—I have.—Then why not use it? Let reason do its work, and what more would you have?

14 You exist but as a part inherent in a greater whole. You will vanish into that which gave you being; or rather, you will be reassumed into the seminal and universal reason.

15 Many grains of frankincense on the same altar: one drops sooner, another later—it makes no difference.

16 In ten days, instead of a monkey or a beast, you can become in the gods' eyes as a god, if you do but revert to the principles of your creed and to reverence for reason.

17 Do not live as though you had a thousand years before you. The common due impends; while you live, and while you may, be good.

18 How much valuable time may be gained by not looking at what some neighbour says or does or thinks, but only taking care that our own acts are just and holy; the good man must not heed black hearts, but head straight for the goal, casting not a glance behind.

19 He who is aflutter for fame perceives not, that of those who remember him every man will soon be dead; so too in due course will each of their successors, till the last flicker of memory, through flutterings and failings, dies altogether out. Nay assume

that those who remember you are immortal, and memory immortal, what is that to you? To you dead, absolutely nothing. Well, but to you living, what good is praise, except indeed for some secondary end? Why then neglect unseasonably nature's present gift, and cling to what one or another says hereafter?

Anything in any wise beautiful or noble, owes the 20
beauty to itself, and with itself its beauty ends; praise forms no part of it; for praise does not make its object worse or better. This is true of the commoner forms of beauty—material objects for instance and works of art—no less than of the ideal; true beauty needs no addition, any more than law, or truth, or kindness, or self-respect. For which of these can praise beautify, or censure mar? Is the emerald less perfect, for lacking praise? or is gold, or ivory, or purple? a lyre or a poinard, a floweret or a shrub?

If souls survive death, how can the air hold them 21
from all eternity? How, we reply, does earth hold the bodies of generation after generation committed to the grave? Just as on earth, after a certain term of survival, change and dissolution of substance makes room for other dead bodies, so too the souls transmuted into air, after a period of survival, change by processes of diffusion and of ignition, and are resumed into the seminal principle of the universe, and in this way make room for others to take up their habitation in their stead. Such is the natural answer, assuming the survival of souls. And we

must consider not only the sum total of bodies duly buried, but also of creatures daily devoured by ourselves and the other animals. What numbers are thus consumed, and as it were buried in the bodies of those who feed on them! Yet the requisite room is provided by the assimilation into blood, and modes of transformation into air or fire. How can the truth be searched out in this case? By distinguishing between matter and cause.

22 Do not be dazed by the whirl. Whatever the impulse, satisfy justice; whatever the impression, make sure of certitude.

23 I am in harmony with all, that is a part of thy harmony, great Universe. For me nothing is early and nothing late, that is in season for thee. All is fruit for me, which thy seasons bear, O Nature! from thee, in thee, and unto thee are all things. "*Dear City of Cecrops!*" saith the poet; and wilt not thou say, 'Dear City of God'?

24 "*Do few things, if you would have cheer.*" A better rule methinks is to do only things necessary, things which in a social being reason dictates, and as it dictates. For this brings the cheer that comes of doing a few things, and doing them well. Most of the things we say or do are not necessary; get rid of them, and you gain time and tranquillity. Thus in every case a man should ask himself, Is this one of the things not necessary? and we ought to get rid not only of actions, that are not necessary, but likewise of impressions; then superfluous actions will not follow in their train.

Make trial of the good man's life and see how in 25
your case it succeeds—of the man satisfied with his allotted portion in the universe, and content to keep his action just, his disposition charitable.

You have seen the other side of the picture? 26
Now look on this. Be tranquil: be simple. Does another do wrong? The wrong is his own. Does aught befall you? It is well—a part of the destiny of the universe ordained for you from the beginning; all that befalls was part of the great web. In fine, *Life is short:* let us redeem the present by help of reasonableness and right. Be sober, be unstrained.

Either an ordered universe, or else a welter of 27
confusion. Assuredly then a world-order. Or think you that order subsisting within yourself is compatible with disorder in the All? And that too when all things, however separate and diffused, beat sympathetically.

"*A black heart*"—ay, a womanish, a perverse 28
heart, a heart of brute beast or babe or cattle, stupid and false and hypocritical, a huckster's or a tyrant's.

If he who does not recognise what is in the uni- 29
verse is a stranger to the universe, none the less is he who does not recognise what is passing there. He is an exile, expatriated from the community of reason; a blind man, with cataract of the mental eye; a pauper, who needs another's help, and cannot provide his own living; an excrescence, who as it were excretes and separates himself from the order of nature, by discontent with his surroundings; for the same nature which produced you, produced them

too; a social outcast, who dissevers his individual soul from the one common soul of reasoning things.

30 One philosopher goes without coat; another without book. Quoth our half-clad friend, 'Bread I have none, yet I hold fast to reason.' And so say I, 'Provender of learning I have none, and yet hold fast.'

31 'Love your trade, however humble,' and find in it refreshment. Spend life's remainder, as one who with his whole heart has committed his all to the gods, and is neither tyrant nor slave to any man.

32 Picture, for instance, the times of Vespasian—there you see folk marrying, rearing children, falling sick, dying, warring, feasting, trading, farming, flattering, pushing, suspecting, plotting, praying for deaths, grumbling at fate, loving, amassing, coveting consulships or crowns. Yet, where now is all that restless life? Or pass a step on to the times of Trajan! Again it is the same. That life too is dead. So likewise scan the many registers of ages and of nations; see how hard they strove, how fast they fell, and were resolved into the elements. Above all dwell in retrospect on those whom you yourself have seen straining after vanities, instead of following out the law of their own being, clinging tight to that, and so therewithal content. This acts as a sure reminder that interest in an object must be in proportion to the real worth of the particular object. It will save you from disheartenment not to become unduly engrossed in things of lesser moment.

33 The accustomed phrases of old days are the archa-

isms of to-day. So too the names that were once on all men's lips, are now as it were archaisms—Camillus, Caeso, Volesus, Dentatus; and a little later, Scipio and Cato; yes even Augustus, and so with Hadrian and Antoninus. All things fade, as a tale that is told, and soon are buried in complete oblivion. This is true even of the shining lights of fame. As for the rest, no sooner is the breath out of them, than they are 'to fortune and to fame unknown.' [1] And what, after all, is eternity of fame? Just emptiness. What then remains, worthy of devotion? One thing only; the understanding just, action unselfish, speech that abhors a lie, and the disposition that welcomes all that befalls, as inevitable, as familiar, and as flowing from a like origin and source.

Freely resign yourself to Clotho, helping her to 34
spin her thread of what stuff she will.

Everything is but for a day, remembrancer alike 35
and the remembered.

Watch how all things continually change, and 36
accustom yourself to realise that Nature's prime delight is in changing things that are, and making new things in their likeness. All that is, is as it were the seed of that which shall issue from it. You must not limit your idea of seed to seeds planted in the earth or in the womb—which is most unphilosophical.

Death is at hand—but not yet are you simple, or 37
unperturbed, or incredulous of possible injury from

[1] Marcus quotes two familiar epithets from Homer, *Od.* i. 242.

without, or serene towards all, or convinced that in just dealing alone is wisdom.

38 Descry men's Inner Selves; see what the wise shun or seek.

39 Evil for you lies not in any self external to your own; nor yet in any phase or alteration of your material shell. Where is it then? In that part of you which forms your views of what is evil. Refuse the view, and all is well. Though the poor flesh, to which it is so near allied, be cut or burned, fester or rot, still let this judging faculty remain at peace, adjudging nothing either bad or good, that can equally befall the bad man and the good. For that which equally befalls a man, whether he conforms to nature or no, is neither for nor against nature.

40 Constantly picture the universe as a living organism, controlling a single substance and a single soul, and note how all things react upon a single world-sense, all act by a single impulse, and all co-operate towards all that comes to pass; and mark the contexture and concatenation of the web.

41 What am I? "*A poor soul laden with a corpse*"—said Epictetus.

42 Things in change take no harm, nor the products of change good.

43 Time is a river, the mighty current of created things. No sooner is a thing in sight, than it is swept past, and another comes sweeping on, and will anon be by.

44 All that befalls is as accustomed and familiar as spring rose, or summer fruit; so it is with disease,

death, slander, intrigue, and all else that joys or vexes fools.

Subsequents follow antecedents by bond of inner 45
consequence; it is no merely numerical sequence of arbitrary and isolated units, but a rational interconnexion. And just as things existent exhibit harmonious co-ordination, so too things coming into being display not bare succession but a marvellous internal relationship.

Remember the word of Heraclitus.—"The death 46
of earth the birth of water, the death of water the birth of air, the death of air fire," and so conversely. Remember too his "reveller, unconscious which way his road leads"; and again, "men quarrel with their ever-present friend," even with the reason that disposes the universe; and his "To what they meet each day, men still keep strange." And again, "We must not act and speak like men asleep," albeit even then we seem to act and speak;[1] nor yet "as children from their father's lips," that is to say, blindly take all for granted.

Suppose some god informed you that to-morrow, 47
or at most the day after, you would be dead, you would not be greatly exercised whether it were the day after rather than to-morrow, not if you have a spark of spirit—for what difference is there worth considering? So, too, never mind whether it is ever so many years hence, or to-morrow.

Constantly realise how many physicians are dead, 48
who often enough knit their brows over their pa-

[1] The same *mot* is cited again vi. 42.

tients; how many astrologers, who pompously predicted others' deaths; philosophers, who filled reams on death or immortality; mighty men, who slew their thousands; tyrants, who mouthed awards of life or death, as though they were Immortals; whole cities buried bodily, Helice, Pompeii, Herculaneum, and others without end. Then count up those whom you have known, one by one; how one buried another, was in his turn laid low, and another buried him; and all this in a little span! In a word, look at all human things, how fleeting and how sorry—but yesterday a mucus clot, to-morrow dust or ashes! Spend your brief moment then according to nature's law, and serenely greet the journey's end, as an olive falls when it is ripe, blessing the branch that bare it and giving thanks to the tree which gave it life.

49 Be like the headland, against which the billows dash continually; but it stands fast, till at its base the boiling breakers are lulled to rest. Say you, 'How unfortunate for me that this should have happened'? Nay rather, 'How fortunate, that in spite of this, I own no pang, uncrushed by the present, unterrified at the future!' The thing might have happened to any one, but not every one could have endured without a pang. Why think that a misfortune, rather than this a good fortune? Can you apply the term misfortune at all to that which is not a frustration of men's nature? or can you regard anything as a frustration of his nature, which is not contrary to the will of that nature? Think

rather—You have learned the will of nature. Can that which has befallen you possibly prevent you from being just, lofty, temperate, discerning, circumspect, truthful, self-respecting, free, and all else in which man's nature finds its full reward? Remember then henceforth in every case where you are tempted to repine, to apply this principle—not, 'The thing is a misfortune,' but 'To bear it bravely is good fortune.'

A simple, yet effectual, help towards disregard 50
of death, is to dwell on those who have clung tenaciously to life. What have they got by it, more than those taken in their prime? Somewhere, somewhen, in any case they lie low, Cadicianus, Fabius, Julianus, Lepidus, and the rest who, however many they first carried to the grave, came thither themselves at last. And the difference after all—how brief it was, how much afflicted, how ill companioned, and in how poor a body! A nothing, compared with the unfathomable past and the infinite beyond. In the presence of that, is not 'Trigerenian Nestor'[1] as the three days' babe?

Ever run the short way—nature's short way— 51
aiming at perfect soundness in every word and every act. Such is the rule that does away with worry and irresolution and all secondary aims and artifice.

[1] A play upon the familiar epithet 'Gerenian' of Nestor, the typical ancient of Greek literature, and Trigeron (*τριγέρων*) 'thrice-aged,' an epithet applied to Nestor by the Greek epigrammatists.

# BOOK V

*ἀνεχου καὶ ἀπεχου*

1 In the morning, when you feel loth to rise, apply the aphorism, 'I am rising for man's work. Why make a grievance of setting about that for which I was born, and for sake of which I have been brought into the world? Is the end of my existence to lie snug in the blankets and keep warm?'—'It is more pleasant so.'—'Is it for pleasure you were made? not for doing, and for action? Look at the plants, the sparrows, the ants, spiders, bees, all doing their business, helping to weld the order of the world. And will you refuse man's part? and not run the way of nature's ordering?'—'Well, but I must have rest.'—'True, yet to rest too nature sets bounds, no less than to eating and to drinking: in spite of which you pass the bounds, you transgress nature's allowance: while in action, far from that, you stop short of what is within your power. You do not truly love yourself; if you did, you would love your nature, and that nature's will. True lovers of their art grow heart and soul absorbed in working at it, going unwashed, unfed; you honour your nature less than the carver does his carving, or the dancer his dancing, or the hoarder his heap, or the vainglorious man his glory. They, for their darling pursuit, readily forego food and sleep, to advance that

upon which they are bent. To you, does social action seem cheaper than such things, and worth less devotion?'

What a solace to banish and efface every tu- 2
multuous, unauthorised impression, and straightway to be lapped in calm!

Claim your right to every word or action that 3
accords with nature. Do not be distracted by the consequent criticism or talk, but if a thing is good to be done or said, do not disclaim your proper right. Other men's self is their own affair, they follow their own impulse: do not you heed them, but keep the straight course, following your own nature and the nature of the universe; and the way of both is one.

I walk the ways of nature, until I fall and shall 4
find rest, exhaling my last breath into that element from which day by day I draw it, so falling at last on that from which my father gathered the seed, my mother the blood, my nurse the milk of life; that which year in, year out, provides my daily meat and drink, supports my tread, bears each indignity of daily use.

You have no special keenness of wit. So be it— 5
yet there are many other qualities of which you cannot say, 'I have no gift that way.' Do but practise them: they are wholly in your power; be sincere, dignified, industrious, serious, not too critical or too exacting, but considerate and frank, with due reserves in action, speech, and accent of authority. See how many good qualities you might exhibit, for

which you cannot plead natural incapacity or unfitness, and how you fail to rise to your opportunities. When you murmur, when you are mean, when you flatter, when you complain of ill-health, when you are self-satisfied and give yourself airs and indulge one humour after another, is it forced on you by lack of natural gifts? Heavens! You might long since have been delivered from all that. It is only after all a question of some slowness, some lack of quickness in perception; and this you can train and discipline, if you do not shut your eyes to it or indulge your own stupidity.

6 There is a kind of man, who, whenever he does a good turn, makes a point of claiming credit for it; and though he does not perhaps press the claim, yet all the same at heart he takes up the position of creditor, and does not forget what he has done. But there is another, who so to say forgets what he has done: he is like the vine that bears a cluster, and having once borne its proper fruit seeks no further recompense. As the horse that runs, the hound that hunts, the bee that hives its honey, so the man who does the kindness does not raise a shout, but passes on to the next act, as a vine to the bearing of clusters for next season.—'What!' you object, 'are we to class ourselves with things that act unconsciously, without intelligence?'—'Yes indeed; but to do so is to assert intelligence; for it is a characteristic of the social being to perceive consciously that his action is social.'—'Quite so; and to wish the recipient too to perceive the same.'—'What you

say is true: but if you thus pervert the maxim's meaning, it will make you one of those described above; who indeed are misled by plausible appeals to reason. Once master the true meaning, and never fear that it will lead you into neglect of any social act.'

An Athenian prayer—*Rain, rain, dear Zeus, upon* 7
*Athenian tilth and plains.* We should either not pray at all, or else in this simple, noble sort.

We talk of doctors' orders, and say: Æsculapius 8
has prescribed him horse exercise, or cold baths, or walking barefoot. It is the same with Nature's orders, when she prescribes disease, mutilation, amputation, or some other form of disablement. Just as doctors' orders mean such and such treatment, as specific for such and such complaint, so every individual has circumstances ordered for him specifically in the way of destiny. Circumstances may be said to *fit* our case, just as masons talk of *fitting* squared stones in bastions or pyramids, when they adjust them so as to complete a given whole. The adjustment is a perfect fit. Just as the universe is the full sum of all the constituent parts, so is destiny the cause and sum of all existent causes. It is no philosopher's secret; it underlies such phrases as 'It so fell out.' 'So fell out' means 'it was so ordered' for the man. Let us accept such orders, as we do the orders of our Æsculapius. They have their rough side, yet we welcome them in hope of health. Try to think of the execution and consummation of Nature's good pleasure as you do of bodily good

health. Welcome all that comes, untoward though it may seem, for it leads you to the goal, the health of the world-order, the welfare and well-being of Zeus. He would not dispense it to the individual, were it not for the good of the whole. Each change and chance dispensed by nature is her specific for that which rests on her disposal. On two grounds then you should acquiesce in what befalls—first, because it happened to you, was ordered for you, affected you, as part of the web issuing from the primal causation; secondly, because that which comes upon the individual contributes to the welfare, the consummation, yea, and the survival, of the power which disposes all things. As with the parts, so is it with the causes; you cannot sever any fragment of the connected unity, without mutilating the perfection of the whole. In every act of discontent, you inflict, so far as in you lies, such severance and so to say undoing.

9 Do not give way to disgust, do not lose heart, do not be discouraged at flaws in strict consistency of conduct: after each check, return to the charge, thankful if in most things you acquit yourself like a man; and returning, love that to which you return; turn once and again to philosophy, not as the urchin to his master, but as the sore-eyed to the sponge and egg, or others to salves or fomentation. Obedience to reason will thus become not a question of outward show, but of inward refreshment. Philosophy, remember, wills only that which nature within you wills; while you willed something not in accord

with nature. 'Why what is more agreeable?' says pleasure, with beguiling voice. Nay but consider, is it more truly agreeable than loftiness of soul, free, simple, gracious and holy? What can be more agreeable than wisdom itself, when you consider the smooth unhalting flow of its intelligence and apprehension?

Things are so wrapped in veils, that to gifted 10
philosophers not a few all certitude seems unattainable. Nay to the Stoics themselves such attainment seems precarious; and every act of intellectual assent is fallible; for where is the infallible man? Pass to the material world; how transitory, how worthless it all is, lying at the disposal of the rake, the harlot or the robber! Or take the characters of those with whom you consort; to bear with even the most gentle-minded is hard work, nay hard enough to put up even with one's self. In all this darkness and filth, in this incessant flux of being and of time, of motion and things moved, I can imagine nothing that deserves high prizing or intent pursuit. On the contrary, while awaiting natural dissolution and not spurning at the delay, one must take comfort to one's self and find new heart solely in these thoughts —first, nothing will happen to me, that is not in accord with Nature: secondly, I need do nothing contrary to the god and deity within me; for that no man can compel me to transgress.

What use am I now making of my soul? that is 11
the question. Put it to yourself at every turn and ask—How goes it with that part of me, known as

the governing Inner Self? Whose soul have I now? the child's? the lad's? the woman's? the tyrant's? the cattle's? or the beast's?

12 This may serve you as a test of what the world calls 'goods.' When once a man pictures the reality of true and veritable 'goods,'—goods such as wisdom self-restraint justice and courage—he cannot with that picture in his mind add the proverbial jest upon excess of goods; it will not fit. So long as the goods he pictures are goods in the popular sense, he will have an open ear for the poet's epigram, and accept it as perfectly in point. It is true enough of excellence, as regarded by the world; otherwise the witticism would not fail to shock and offend; and applied to wealth, and the appurtenances of luxury or show, we accept it as a smart and pointed epigram. To it then, and ask yourself—Can I accord the dignity or the idea of 'goods' to things which do not by their conception preclude the approbrious taunt, that the abundance of them leaves the owner not a corner 'to ease himself in'? [1]

13 I consist of two elements, the causal and the material; neither can perish or cease to exist, just as neither came into being from previous non-existence. It follows then that every part of me will be co-ordinated by change into some other part of the world-order, and that again into some new part, and

[1] The reference is to a fragment of Menander, restored by Cobet with the help of this paragraph, and running thus:—

> There's an old proverb, sir, against profusion,
> If you'll excuse the somewhat coarse allusion—
> With such a glut of goods, amid the pelf
> You've not a corner left in which to ease yourself.

so on *ad infinitum*. My existence is but a stage in the succession, and so too that of my parents, and so backwards once more *ad infinitum*. There is no objection to this view, even supposing the world is ordered in finite cosmic cycles.

Reason and the reasoning process are in themselves and their action self-sufficing faculties. They derive their impulse from their own beginning; they march to their appointed end. Hence the term rectitude [1] applied to conduct, signifying that it never swerves from the right path. 14

Nothing strictly belongs to man, which is not proper to man, as man. Such things are not among man's requirements, they have no warranty in man's nature, and they do not perfect or complete that nature. Neither therefore does man's true end lie in them, nor that which consummates the end, to wit the good. Were any of these things proper to man, it could not also be proper for him to despise them and rebel against them; nor could self-detachment from them be laudable; nor, if they were truly goods, could going short of them minister to goodness. Whereas, the more a man deprives himself of such things, or puts up with deprivation, the better he becomes. 15

Repeat impressions, and your understanding will assimilate itself to them; for the soul takes the dye of its impressions. Steep it then constantly in such sequences as these:—where life is possible, so too is 16

[1] The etymological correspondence between κατόρθωσις, *rectitude* or *rightness of action*, and ὀρθότης, *directness* of movement, baffles literal translation.

right life; you live at court, then at court too live aright. Or again—for whatsoever purpose each thing is constituted, thereto it tends; and whereto it tends, there lies its end; and where its end is, there too is each thing's gain and good. It follows that the good of the reasoning creature lies in social action; for it has been long since shown, that we are made for social action. Is it not palpable, that the lower forms exist for the higher, and the higher for one another? And things with breath of life are higher than things without; and things with reason than with breath alone.

17 Pursuit of the impossible is idiotcy; yet for the worthless to abstain from such pursuit is impossible.

18 Nothing happens to a man that nature has not made him for. See! the same things happen to another; and from ignorance of what has happened, or for show of superiority, he stands stedfast and undemoralised. What! ignorance and self-complacency more strong than wisdom! For shame!

19 Things material cannot touch the soul in any way whatever, nor find entrance there, nor have power to sway or move it. Soul is self-swayed, self-moved; and soul modifies the objects upon which it plays into accord with the judgments which it approves.

20 In one respect man stands to us in the closest of all relations—we must do good to them and bear with them. But in so far as individuals obstruct my proper action, man falls into the category of things indifferent, just as much as sun or wind or

wild beast. They may indeed contravene some particular action, but inner impulse and disposition they cannot contravene, for these are subject to reservation and also have inner modifying power. For the understanding modifies and converts every hindrance to action into furtherance of its prime aim; so that checks to action actually advance it, and obstacles in the way promote progress.

In the universe honour that which is highest; 21
and the highest is that which all else subserves, and which overrules all. So too within yourself honour the highest; there too it is the same in kind: it is that within you which all other powers subserve, and by which your life is disposed.

What is not hurtful to the city, cannot hurt the 22
citizen. Whenever you feel the sense of hurt apply this criterion—If the city is not hurt, neither am I myself. If the city is hurt, do not fly into a rage with the author of the hurt; ask, what misconception prompted it?

Think often of the swiftness with which things 23
that are or come to be sweep past and disappear. Being is a river in continual flow; its action for ever changing, its causes infinite in phase. Hardly a thing stands fast, even within your own purview. Infinity past and to come is a fathomless gulf, into which vanish all things. How foolish then in such a world to pant, to strain, to fume, as though time and troubling were for long!

Think of the sum of being, and in what a morsel 24
of it you partake; the sum of time, compared with the

brief atom assigned to you; of destiny, and the jot you are of it!

25 Does another wrong me? See he to that—his disposition, his actions are his own. For me, I have at this present just that which universal nature wills me to have, and am doing just that which my own nature wills me to do.

26 Whether the physical currents run smooth or rough, let them not sway the governing and sovereign self within. It must not confound itself with them, but remain self-determinant, and circumscribe all such affections within the parts affected. When these react upon the understanding by that sympathy of parts which exists in an organic unity, we must not attempt to resist the physical sensation; but on the other hand the Inner Self must not go on to assume on its own authority that the affection is either good or bad.

27 Live with the gods. And he lives with the gods, who ever presents to them his soul acceptant of their dispensations, and busy about the will of god, even that particle of Zeus, which Zeus gives to every man for his controller and governor—to wit, his mind and reason.

28 Do you get angry at rank armpits? or at foul breath? What would be the good? Mouth, armpits are what they are, and being so, the given effluvia must result.—'Yes, but nature has given man reason, man can comprehend and understand what offends!'— 'Very good! *Ergo* you too have reason; use your moral reason to move his; show him his

error, admonish him. If he attends, you will amend him; no need for anger—you are not a ranter, or a whore.'

You can live here on earth, as you think to live after your departure hence. If others disallow, then indeed it is time to quit; yet even so, not as one aggrieved. The cabin smokes—so I take leave of it. Why make ado? But so long as there is no such notice to quit, I remain free, and none will hinder me from doing what I will; that is, to conform to the nature of a reasonable social being. 29

The mind of the universe is social. For see, it has made the lower for sake of the higher; and combines the higher in a mutual harmony. See how it subordinates here, co-ordinates there, apportions everywhere according to worth, and combines the dominants in mutual accord. 30

What of your past behaviour to the gods, to your parents, brothers, wife, children, teachers, tutors, friends, intimates, household? Can you, in respect of all, say— 31

I wrought no froward deed, said no rude word.[1]

Yet recollect what has carried you safe through, and what you have found strength to bear; remember that the story of your life is fully told and its service accomplished; recollect how many sights of beauty you have seen; how many pleasures and pains foregone; how many ambitions disregarded; and how often you have shown grace to the graceless.

[1] Homer, *Od.* iv. 690.

32 How is it that souls untrained and ignorant confound the trained and wise? The answer is, What soul is trained and wise? That only which knows the beginning and the end, and the reason diffused through all being, which through all eternity administers the universe in periodic cycles.

33 A little while and you will be ashes or a skeleton, a name or not so much as a name; and what is a name but so much rattle and sound? Life and all its prizes are empty, rotten, insignificant, snapping puppies or quarrelsome children, that laugh and anon fall to crying. Faith and honour, justice and truth have taken wing—

From widewayed earth to heaven.[1]

What then still detains you here? The objects of sense are changeful and unstable; the organs of sense dim, and easily imposed upon; poor soul itself mere exhalation of the blood. And good repute in such a world is emptiness. What then? serenely you await the end, be it extinction or transmutation. While the hour yet tarries, what help is there? what, but to reverence and bless the gods, to do good to men, 'to endure and to refrain'? and of all that lies outside the bounds of flesh and breath, to remember that it is not yours, nor in your power.

34 Life in smooth flow is yours, if only you hold straight on, keeping the track in views and acts. Two things are common to the soul of god, the soul of man, and the soul of every rational creature.

[1] Hesiod, *Works and Days*, v. 197.

First, another cannot contravene their purpose; secondly, in disposition and action attuned to justice lies their good, and therewith cessation of desire.

If the fault is not in me, nor the act by fault of 35
mine, nor the common weal hurt thereby, why trouble more about it? What hurt is it to the common weal?

Do not let impression overbear judgment; cope 36
with it according to your power, and by scale of worth. Should you come short at all in things of secondary worth, do not regard it as an injury—that were an evil habitude. Like the old man in the play, who at parting begged for his foster-child's top, but did not forget that after all it was a top and nothing more—so be it too with life.

Declaiming from the rostra you cry, 'My good 37
man, have you forgotten what these good things come to after all?'—'True,' comes the answer, 'but for all that eagerly pursued.'—'Is that a good reason for your joining in the folly?'—Wheresoever stranded, I can at any time become a man 'of fortune.' For 'fortune' means self-appropriation of endowments truly good, and good endowments are—good moods, good impulses, good acts.

# BOOK VI

νοῦς διεκόσμησε πάντα—ANAXAGORAS

1 THE substance of the universe is tractable and plastic: and in the disposing reason there inheres no cause that makes for evil, for it contains no evil, does no evil, and inflicts no hurt on anything. By it all things come into being and run their course.

2 Do your duty—whether shivering or warm, never mind; heavy-eyed, or with your fill of sleep; in evil report or in good report; dying or with other work in hand. Dying after all is but one among life's acts; there too our business is 'to make the best of it.'

3 Look within; do not let the specific quality or worth of anything escape you.

4 All material things soon change—by evaporation, where there is unity of being; otherwise, by dispersion.

5 The disposing reason knows its condition, its action, and the material on which it works.

6 Not to do likewise is the best revenge.

7 Be it your one delight and refreshment, to pass from social act to social act, remembering god.

8 Our Inner governing Self is that which is self-excited and self-swayed, which makes itself just what it wills to be, and which makes all that befalls seem to itself what it wills.

All things run their course in accordance with the nature of the universe; there is no other competing nature, that either comprehends this from without, or is itself comprehended within, or that exists externally and unattached. 9

The world is either a welter of alternate combination and dispersion, or a unity of order and providence. If the former, why crave to linger on in such a random medley and confusion? why take thought for anything except the eventual 'dust to dust'? why vex myself? do what I will, dispersion will overtake me. But on the other alternative, I reverence, I stand stedfast, I find heart in the power that disposes all. 10

When torn in pieces by the press of claims, straightway fall back upon yourself, and do not break tune or rhythm more than you must; by thus habitually falling back on self, you will be more master of the harmony. 11

Had you a stepmother and a mother too, you would be courteous to the former, but for companionship would turn continually to your mother. For you the court is one, philosophy the other. Once and again turn back to her, to find refreshment; she makes even court life seem bearable to you, and you in it. 12

In regarding meats or eatables, you say, That is the carcase of a fish, or fowl, or pig; or, Falernian is so much extract of grape juice; the purple robe is sheep's wool dyed with the juices of the shell-fish; copulation, a functional discharge. Regards of this 13

kind explore and search the actual facts, opening your eyes to what things really are. So should you deal with life as a whole, and where regards are over-credulous, strip the facts bare, see through their worthlessness, and so get rid of their vaunted embellishments. Pride is the arch sophist; and when you flatter yourself you are most engrossed in virtuous ends, then are you most befooled. Remember what Crates says of Xenocrates himself.

14 The admiration of the crowd is usually for natural objects, whose unity is due to 'inward hold' or to organic growth, stone for instance, wood, fig-trees, vines or olives: at the next stage it fastens on effects of soul, as seen in flocks and herds: the more initiated still look for effects of rational soul, not as yet universal in its scope, but manifesting itself in art, or in talent of some kind, or in the bare possession of troops of slaves.[1] But he who honours rational soul, of universal and social aims, no longer heeds aught else, but strives before everything to keep his own soul alive and quick to rational and social impulses, and joins with all of like kind in working to this end.

15 Things hasten into being, things hasten out of it; even as a thing comes into being, this or that part is extinct: phases of flux and variation continuously renew the world, just as the unfailing current of time perennially renews eternity. In this river of

[1] The reference to slaves may seem abrupt and irrelevant. But at Rome the connoisseur gratified his tastes, or established his reputation, by the employment of slaves: the men of light and leading kept their 'slave' establishment of painters, gem-cutters, grammarians, scribes, philosophers, and the like, just as the wealthy of to-day collect libraries or pictures or blue china.

existence how can one prize much any of the things that race by, on none of which one can take firm stand? it were like setting one's love on some sparrow that flits past and in an instant is out of sight. Life itself is after all no more than much exhalation of blood and respiration of air. Each single breath, an inhalation and emission, such as we perform every moment, is one in kind with that final emission of the quickening *pneuma*, which you received but yesterday at birth, and now render back to the element from which you first drew it.

What is worth prizing? Not the power of tran- 16
spiration, which we share with plants; nor respiration, shared with cattle and brute beasts; nor the impressions of sense; nor the pulls of impulse; nor herding with each other; nor nutrition, which after all is no better than excretion. What then? the clapping of men's hands? No, nor clapping of their tongues; for the applause of the multitude is but a clatter of tongues. Discarding reputation then, what is there that remains prizeworthy? To my mind, this—command of one's appointed being, alike for action and inaction, in the direction of its guiding pursuits and arts. For the aim of every art is right adaptation of the product to the end for which it is produced; the gardener who tends the vine, the horse-breaker, the dog-trainer, all seek this end; all forms of training and teaching make for some object; there lies the true end of worth: secure that, and you need lay claim to nothing else. Give up prizing a multitude of other things, or you will

never be free, self-sufficing, passionless. Inevitably you will envy, grudge, and look askance at those who can rob you of your prize, and plot against those who have what you yourself covet: the sense of something lacking makes discord within, and leads on to constant complaining against the gods. To respect and honour your own understanding alone will put you at satisfaction with yourself, in harmony with all things social, and in accord with the gods, well pleased that is to say with their dispensation and world-ordering.

17 Upwards, downwards, round and round, course the elements. But the motion of virtue is none of these; it is of diviner kind, and pursues the even tenor of courses unimagined.

18 What a thing is man! To contemporaries living at their side they will not give a good word, yet themselves set store on the good word of posterity, whom they have never seen nor will see. It comes near to being vexed at not having the good word of your ancestors!

19 Because your own strength is unequal to the task, do not assume that it is beyond the powers of man; but if anything is within the powers and province of man, believe that it is within your own compass also.

20 In the gymnasium, when some one scratches us with his nails or in lunging hits our head, we do not protest, or take offence, or harbour rooted suspicions of design; no, we just keep our eye upon him, not with hostility or suspicion, but with good-tempered avoidance. So too with the rest of life; let us

shut our eyes to much in those who are as it were tussling at our side. It is open to us to avoid; we need not suspect or quarrel.

If any one can convince and show me that some 21
view or action of mine is wrong, I will cheerfully change: I seek the truth, which never yet hurt any man. What hurts is persisting in self-deceit and ignorance.

I do my own duty; all things else distract me not; 22
for they are either things without breath, or things without reason, or things misguided, that know not the way.

You have reason; unreasoning creatures and the 23
world of material things have none: therefore in your dealings with them rise superior and free. Men have reason; therefore in your dealings with them, own the social tie. In all things call upon the gods. And trouble not over the time it occupies; three hours so spent avail.

Death put Alexander of Macedon and his stable 24
boy on a par. Either they were received into the seminal principles of the universe, or were alike dispersed into atoms.

Consider how many things, physical and psychi- 25
cal, go on at one and the same moment within each one of us; no wonder then that many more, yea all things created, co-inhere together in the one great whole, which we call the universe.

If some one asks you, 'How is Antoninus spelt?' 26
are you going to excite yourself over the utterance of each letter? Well then, if some one flies into a

rage, are you going to rage back? Will you not rather quietly enumerate the characters in order one by one? Here too remember that every duty is the sum of given units. Keep steadily to these, without perturbation and without retaliation of ill-will, pursuing methodically your appointed end.

27 Cruel, is it not, to prevent men from pushing for what looks like their own advantage? Yet in a sense you forbid them that, when you resent their going wrong. They are doubtless bent upon their own objects and advantage.—'Not so,' you say, 'in reality.'—Teach them so then and prove it, instead of resenting it.

28 Death is rest from impressions of sense, from pulls of impulse, from searchings of thought, and from service of the flesh.

29 Shame on it! in this mortal life, the soul to lose heart before the body!

30 See that you be not be-Cæsared, steeped in that dye, as too often happens. Keep yourself simple, good, sincere, grave, unaffected, a friend to justice, god-fearing, considerate, affectionate, and strenuous in duty. Struggle to remain such as philosophy would have you. Respect the gods, save men. *Life is short;* and the earthly life has but one fruit, inward holiness and social acts. In all things the disciple of Antoninus. Remember his resolute championship of reason, his unvarying equability, his holiness, his serenity of look, his affability, his dislike of ostentation, his keenness for certitude about the facts; how he would never drop a subject, till

he saw into it thoroughly and understood clearly; how he bore unjust reproaches without a word; how he was never in a hurry; how he gave no ear to slander; how accurately he scrutinised character and action; never carping, or craven, or suspicious, or pedantic; how frugal were his requirements, in house and bed and dress and food and service; how industrious he was and how long-suffering; how, thanks to his abstemious living, he could wait till evening, never requiring to relieve his physical needs except at the usual hour. Remember his constancy and evenness in friendship, his forbearance to outspoken opposition, his cheerful acceptance of correction; and how god-fearing he was, though without superstition. Remember all this, that so your last hour may find you with a conscience clear as his.

Recall your true, your sober self: shake off the 31
slumber and realise that they were dreams that troubled you. Now wide awake once more, look on it all as a dream.

I am of body and soul. To the body all things 32
are indifferent; it has no power to make differences. To the understanding all things are indifferent, its own activities excepted. But its own activities are all within its own control. Moreover, even of these, it is concerned only with the present; future or past activities become at once themselves indifferent.

No pain of hand or of foot is contrary to nature, 33
so long as the foot is doing foot's work, and the hand hand's. So too to man, as man, no pain is contrary to nature, so long as he is doing man's

work. If it violates nature, for him it ceases to exist and is no evil for him.

34 What rare pleasures please robbers, rakes, parricides, tyrants!

35 See how common craftsmen accommodate themselves to some extent to ignorant employers, but all the same hold fast to the principles of their craft and decline to depart from them. Shame on us, that the architect and the doctor should have more respect to the principles of their craft, than man to his, which he shares with the gods.

36 In the universe Asia and Europe are but corners; ocean a drop; Athos a grain; the span of time, a moment in eternity. All things are small, unstable, vanishing. All issue from one source, starting directly from the universal Soul, or derivatively consequent. Even the lion's jaw, venom, and all things baleful, thorns, mud or what not, are consequents of things grand and beautiful. Do not regard them as alien to that which you worship, but reflect upon the common source of all.

37 He who sees what now is, hath seen all, all that was from eternity, all that shall be without end; for all things are of one kind and of one form.

38 Consider oftentimes the bond that knits all things in the world-order, and their mutual relationship. All things as it were intertwine, all are in so far mutually dear; for thing follows thing in order, as the result of the continuous vibration that thrills through all, and the unity of all being.

39 Put yourself in harmony with the things among

which your lot is cast; love those with whom you have your portion, with a true love.

If any tool, or implement, or utensil is doing the 40
work for which it was produced, it is well with it; though there the producer is no longer by. But in nature's unities the power which produced is still within them and abides: so much the more then must you have respect to it, and believe that, if you handle and employ all according to its will, you have all to your mind. So is it with the universe, whose all is to its mind.

If you assume anything that lies outside your 41
own control to be a good for you or an evil, then the incidence of such evil or the deprivation of such good drives you into finding fault with the gods, and hating the men responsible now or in the near future for such deprivation or incidence; and oftentimes we sin, from being bent upon such things. But if we account only that which is in our own control as good or bad, there remains no reason either for arraigning god, or setting ourselves at feud with man.

One and all we work towards one consummation, 42
some knowingly and intelligently, others unconsciously. Just as Heraclitus, was it not, said of those who sleep, that they too are at work, fellow-workers in the conduct of the universe. One works in one way, another in another; and not least, he who finds fault and who tries to resist and undo what is done. Even of such the world has need. It remains then to make sure, in which ranks you range yourself; he who disposes all things will in

any case make good use of you, and will receive you into the number of his fellow-workers and auxiliaries. Only do not you play foil to the rest like the coarse jest in the Comedy, to use the figure of Chrysippus.[1]

43 Does the sun claim the rain's work? or Æsculapius that of Ceres? or take each single star—are not all different, yet all co-operating to the same end?

44 If the gods took counsel about me and what ought to befall me, doubtless they counselled well: a god of ill counsel one can scarce imagine. And what should impel them to seek my hurt? What advantage were it either to them or to the universe, which is the first object of their providence? If they took no counsel about me in particular, for the universe at all events they did, and the consequent results I am bound to welcome and acquiesce in. If indeed they take no thought for anything at all—an impious creed,—then let us have done with sacrifice and prayer and oaths, and all other observances by which we own the presence and the nearness of the gods. But if after all they take no thought for anything to do with us, then it is in my own power to take thought for myself; and what I have to consider is my own interest; and the true interest of everything is to conform to its own constitution and nature; and my nature owns reason and social obligation; socially, as Antoninus, my city and coun-

[1] Plutarch, *De Comm. Not.* xiv., elucidates the reference. 'Just as comedies introduce jests which are vulgar enough in themselves, yet improve the piece as a whole; so too you may criticise evil regarded by itself, yet allow that taken with all else it has its use.'

try is Rome, as a man, the world. These are the societies, whose advantage can alone be good to me.

All that befalls the individual is for the good of 45
the whole. That might suffice. But looking closer you will perceive the general rule that what is good for one man is good for other men as well. And 'good' may be taken more collectively than in the case of things indifferent.

As in the amphitheatre or other places of amuse- 46
ment the monotony of tedious repetitions makes the spectacle pall, so is it with the experience of life; up and down, everything is one monotonous round. How long? How long?

Constantly realise the dead—men of all kinds, 47
of every vocation, of every nationality, all dead. Come down if you will to Philistion, Phœbus, Origanion. Pass now to other 'tribes of the great dead': we too must pass whither so many have gone before—skilled orators, august philosophers, Heraclitus, Pythagoras, and Socrates; the heroes of old time; generals and monarchs that came after; and in their train Eudoxus, Hipparchus, Archimedes, minds keen and lofty, wits busy, supple and precocious: yes and the Menippuses too, who have made man's fateful fleeting life their jest. Realise all these, all long since in the dust. What matters it to them? what, still more, to those who have not even left a name? Here one thing is of real worth, to live out life in truth and justice, with charity even to the false and the unjust.

When you want to cheer your spirits, consider 48

the excellences of those about you—one so effective, another so unassuming, another so open-handed, and so on and so on. Nothing is more cheering than exemplifications of virtue in the characters of those about us, suggesting themselves as copiously as possible. We should keep them always ready to hand.

49 Does it annoy you to weigh so many pounds only, instead of three hundred? It is the same with living so many years only, and not more. You are content with the quantum of matter allowed you; be so too with the time.

50 Try to persuade men: but act, whether it is liked or not, when principles of justice so demand. If some one obstructs you by force, welcome the rebuff and own no pang, utilising the hindrance for exercise of virtue in another form. Endeavour, remember, was subject to reservation, and you did not aspire to impossibilities. To what then did you aspire? To the endeavour just such as it was. Gain that, and the object, for which we were sent into the world, is realised.

51 The ambitious man rests personal good upon action that depends on others; the man of pleasure upon personal affections of the body: the man of mind upon personal action.

52 You can decline this or that view of the matter, and so escape all tumult of soul; things in themselves have no power to force our judgments.

53 Practise attention to what others say, and do your best to get into the speaker's mind.

What is not good for the swarm is not good for the bee. 54

If the sailors abused the pilot, or the sick the physician, would they have any other object, than to make him save the crew or heal the patients? 55

How many with whom I came into the world have already quitted it! 56

To the jaundiced honey seems bitter; to the hydrophobe water is horrible; to children a ball is a thing of beauty. Then why lose my temper? Think you false opinion takes less effect, than bile in the jaundiced or the virus in hydrophobia? 57

No one can stop you from living according to the principle of your own nature: nothing will happen to you contrary to the principle of the universal nature. 58

Think what men are! whom they care to please! what they gain by it! what they do for it! How soon time will bury all! how much it has buried already! 59

# BOOK VII

ἦθος ἀνθρώπου δαίμων—Heraclitus

ἦθος πηγὴ βίου—Zeno

1 What is evil? It is what you have seen again and again; and in every case that occurs, remind yourself that it is what you have seen again and again. Up and down, everywhere you will find the same things, repeating themselves at every page of history, ancient, mediæval or contemporary; repeating themselves every day in our own cities and homes. Nothing is new; all is stale and all is fleeting.

2 Look to first principles; and how can they be deadened, but by the extinction of the impressions to which they correspond? and these you may continually kindle into glow. On the given thing, I have the power to take the right view; if so, why vex myself? Things outside my own understanding are nothing to my understanding. Grasp that, and you stand upright; you can ever renew your life. See things once more as you saw them before; and therein you have new life.

3 A mimic pageant, a stage spectacle, flocking sheep and herding cows, an armed brawl, a bone flung to curs, a crumb dropped in the fish-tanks, toiling of burdened ants, the scamper of scurrying mice, puppets pulled with strings—such is life. In such surroundings you must take your stand, considerate

and undisdainful; yet understand the while, that the measure of the man's worth is the worth of his aims.

In talk we must intelligently understand what is said, and in endeavour what is done. In the latter, look straight at the aim to which it tends; in the former, watch carefully the meaning conveyed. 4

Have I understanding equal to the task, yes or no? If yes, I use it for the work, as a tool given me by Nature: if no, either I step aside in favour of some one better able to accomplish the work, or, if that seems inappropriate, ally myself as best I can with some one, who by help of my initiative can do what is opportune and serviceable for the common fellowship. For all I do, whether alone or with another's help, should aim solely at what promotes the service and harmony of all. 5

How many, after choruses of praise, have dropped into oblivion; how many, who swelled the chorus, have long since disappeared! 6

Do not be ashamed of being helped. It is incumbent upon you to do your appointed work, like a soldier in the breach. What if you are lame and cannot scale the battlement alone, but can with another's help? 7

Let not the future perturb you. You will face it, if so be, with the same reason which is yours to meet the present. 8

All things intertwine one with another, in a holy bond: scarce one thing is disconnected from another. In due co-ordination they combine for one and the 9

same order. For the world-order is one made out of all things, and god is one pervading all, and being is one, and law is one, even the common reason of all beings possessed of mind, and truth is one: seeing that truth is the one perfecting of beings one in kind and endowed with the same reason.

10 Every material thing fast vanishes into the sum of being: and every cause is quickly reassumed into the universal reason; and the memory of everything is quickly buried beneath eternity.

11 To the reasoning being the act which is according to nature is likewise according to reason.

12 Upright or uprighted.

13 As in physical organisms the unity is made up of separate limbs, so among reasoning things the reason is distributed among individuals, constituted for unity of co-operation. This thought will strike more home, if you constantly repeat to yourself 'I am a member of the sum of reasoning things.' If you substitute *meros* for *melos*—part for member—you do not yet love men from your heart; you have yet no certitude of joy in doing kindnesses; they are still bare duty, not yet a good deed to yourself.

14 Affect what will the parts of my being liable to affection from without! the parts affected can if they please find fault. So long as I do not view the infliction as an evil, I remain uninjured. And I need not so view it.

15 Whatever any one else does or says, my duty is to be good; just as gold or emerald or purple for

ever say, Whatever any one else does or says, my duty is to be emerald and keep my proper hue.

The Inner Self does not agitate itself—does not, 16
for instance, terrify itself or excite its own desires. If some one else can terrify or vex it, let him. It will refuse to induct itself into such moods by assumptions of its own. The body must take thought for its own hurts, as best it can, and if hurt say so; the soul, which is the organ of terror, vexation or any assumption of the kind, declines to allow any hurt; you cannot wrest it to any such judgment. The Inner Self is self-complete, subject to none but self-created needs, and free accordingly from every perturbation or contravention, except such as arise from its own action.

Happiness—literally, god within, or good.[1] What 17
are you about here, Impression, you deceiver? Be off, sir—as you came: I will none of you.—'You have come as an old friend,' you say?—Well, peace be with you; only, begone!

Does change terrify you? Yet what can come 18
into being without change? What after all is dearer, or more proper to Nature? Can you have your bath, without change passing upon the firewood? or nourishment, without change passing upon the viands? Can any serviceable thing be accomplished without change? Do you not see that change within yourself is of a piece with this, and equally indispensable to Nature?

Being is as it were a torrent, in and out of which 19

[1] A play on the derivation of the Greek word *Eudaimonia*, and untranslatable.

all bodies pass, coalescing and co-operating with the whole, as the various parts in us do with one another. How many a Chrysippus, how many a Socrates, how many an Epictetus has time past swallowed up! Extend the thought to every man and every thing whatsoever.

20 One thing alone torments me, the fear of doing something which is not meant for the constitution of man, or in the way not meant, or not meant as yet.

21 Soon you will have forgotten all; soon all will have forgotten you.

22 It is man's special gift to love even those who fall into blunders: it operates as soon as it suggests, that men are your brothers, that sin is of ignorance and unintentional, that in a little you will both be dead, that, above all, no injury is done you; your Inner Self is not made worse than it was before.

23 From the sum of being, as from wax, Nature now moulds a nag; then breaks it up, and utilises the material to make a tree; next, a man; next, some other thing; and each has but a brief existence. But it is no hardship for the chest to be broken up, any more than to be knocked together.

24 A scowl upon the face is a violation of nature. Repeated often, beauty dies with it, and finally becomes quenched, past all rekindling. From this fact try to understand, that it is contrary to reason; if once sensibility to sin is lost, what object in still living on?

25 A little while, and nature which disposeth all

things will change all that you see, and of their substance make new things, and others again of theirs, that the world may be ever fresh.

When any one does you a wrong, set yourself at 26
once to consider, what was the point of view, good or bad, that led him wrong. As soon as you see it, you will be sorry for him, not surprised or angry. For your own view of good is either the same as his, or something like in kind: and you will make allowance. Or supposing your own view of good and bad has altered, you will find charity for his mistake come easier.

Do not imagine yourself to have what you have 27
not; but take full account of the excellences which you do possess, and in gratitude remember how you would hanker after them, if you had them not. At the same time take care that in thus hugging them, you do not get into the habit of prizing them so much, that without them you would be perturbed.

Withdraw into yourself. By nature our reason- 28
ing Inner Self finds self-contentment in just dealing and the calm which follows in its train.

Efface impression. Check the pulls of impulse. 29
Circumscribe time to the present. Recognise all that befalls, either yourself, or another. Divide and analyse each material thing into cause and matter. Realise your last hour. Let the wrong remain with him, with whom it first originated.

Keep thought intent on what is said; enter with 30
your mind into what is done and what is doing it.

Be your brightness that of simplicity and self- 31

respect, and of indifference to all that is not virtue or vice. Love mankind. Walk with God. "*All things by law*," saith the sage. Yes! Gods or atoms, it suffices to remember that *All things are by law*. Two words sum all.

32 Of Death. Death, in a universe of atoms, is dispersion; but if all is a unity, death is either extinction or transmutation.

33 Of Pain. Pain that is past bearing, brings an end; pain that lasts, can be borne. The understanding in abstraction maintains its calm, and the Inner Self is unimpaired. As for the parts injured by the pain, let them (as best they can) state their own case.

34 Of Reputation. Look at their understandings, what they are, what they shun, what they seek. And remember that as drift hides drift of piling sand, so too in life what comes after soon hides what went before.

35 From Plato. "'*Think you the man of lofty understanding, whose vision ranges over all time and all being, can think great things of man's life?*'—'*Impossible.*'—'*Such an one then will attach no very great importance to death.*'—'*Death! no indeed.*'" [1]

36 From Antisthenes. "*Well-doing, ill-report—a king's portion.*"

37 Shame on it—for feature and gesture and exterior adornment to obey the bidding of the understanding, and for the understanding not to rule its own gesture and adornment.

38 Fret not at circumstance, which recks not of it.[2]

[1] Plato, *Republic*, vi. 486 A. [2] Euripides, *Bellerophon* (Fr. 298).

To the immortal gods and us give joy. 39

Lives are reaped like ears of corn, 40
One is spared, another shorn.[1]

Though I and both my sons be spurned of God, 41
There is be sure a reason.

Right on my side and justice.[2] 42

*"No wailing with the wailers, and no fever-throbs."* 43

From Plato. *"To such an one I should justly re-* 44
*ply—There, friend, you are mistaken; a man who is worth anything at all should not reckon the chances of life or death, but simply ask himself, in regard to any action, Is it right or is it wrong? the act of a good man or a bad?"* [3]

*"The truth is, gentlemen, it stands thus. Wherever* 45
*a man's post is, whether selected by himself or assigned by his commander, there, as I believe, it is his duty to stand fast in the hour of danger, recking nothing of death or anything else in comparison with dishonour."* [4]

*"O my friend, I would have you see that the noble* 46
*and the good is possibly something quite different from saving and being saved; the true man will take little account of a few years more or less of life; that he will leave to God, not hugging life, but believing that, as the women say, no man can escape the hour of destiny; and he will turn his thoughts to consider how he can best spend the term of life appointed him to live."* [5]

*"Survey the courses of the stars, and join their* 47
*heavenly race."* Constantly realise the mutual trans-

[1] Euripides, *Hypsipyle* (Fr. 752).
[2] Aristophanes, *Acharnians*, v. 661.
[3] Plato, *Apology*, 28 B.
[4] Ibid. 28 E.
[5] Plato, *Gorgias* 512·D E.

formations of the elements. For such imaginings purge away the soils of this earth-life.

48 A fine thought of Plato's. So likewise in discoursing of men, we should, "*as from some eminence, survey earth and its herds*,"—camps, farms, marriages, severances, births, deaths, the babel of the law-courts, wastes of wilderness, motley barbarians, festivals, dirges, fairs, the confused medley of life and the order wrought out of opposites.

49 Review the past, its changing powers and dynasties, and you can forecast the future too. The same forms will in every case repeat themselves; the march of things keeps steady time. To witness human life for forty years, or forty thousand, is all one. What more will you see?

50 Growths of earth return to earth;
Seeds that spring of heavenly birth,
To heavenly realms anon revert— [1]

yes, by dissolution of the atomic combinations, and consequent scattering of the impassive elements.

51 By meat and drink and sorcery
Divert the sluice of destiny! [2]

. . . . .

God sends the breeze; then murmur not,
Undaunted face the apportioned lot.

52 "*More knock-me-down*" [3] I grant, but not more social-minded, more self-respecting, more disciplined

[1] Euripides, *Chrysippus* (Fr. 833).
[2] Euripides, *Supplices*, v. 1110-11.
[3] The word belongs to the Dorian vernacular, and recalls at once the Spartan apophthegm dear to Stoic teachers. Plutarch thus gives it, *Apoph. Lac.* 236 E. A young Spartan was vanquished at Olympia. 'So your antagonist,' said some one, 'proved the better man.'—'Better, nay! but more knock-me-down.'

to circumstance, more charitable to the oversights of neighbours.

Where performance of an act accords with that 53
reason which men share with gods, there have no fear. Where service may be rendered by action that keeps the even way and tenor of your appointed being, there apprehend no harm.

Everywhere, always, thus much is in your power, 54
god-fearing acceptance of your present hap, just dealing with your present associates, and satisfied contentment with the present impression, that none intrude uncertified.

Look not aside to other men's Selves, but fix your 55
eyes straight on the goal, to which nature points the way—nature at large by circumstance, your own nature by the acts required of you. Everything must act according to its constitution: and by constitution all other things exist for sake of those with reason, just as in every other case the lower exist for sake of the higher, and things with reason for sake of one another. In man's constitution the primary element is the social; the second, that it is proof against the bodily affections; for the motions of reason and mind are self-determinant, and refuse subordination to the motions of sense or impulse, both which are animal in kind. The intellectual claim primacy, and will not be brought into subjection; and justly so, for their function is to use all the rest. Thirdly, the constitution of man's reason includes circumspection and immunity from error. Let but the Inner Self hold fast to these

and keep a straight course, and it comes by its own.

56 As one dead, and who has heretofore not found life, resolve to live out what is left in nature's way, as a gift of grace.

57 Love that which comes to pass inwoven in the web, that and nothing else. What could better suit your need?

58 At each cross hap keep before your eyes those who had the same to bear, who consequently were vexed and aggrieved and full of complaining. Where are they now? nowhere. Why follow their example then, instead of leaving others' moods to those who sway or are swayed by them, and devoting yourself solely to making what use you can of the mishap? Then you will put it to good use; you will make it your working material. Aim only and care only in each action to stand self-approved. In both respects remember that that on which action is based is in itself indifferent.

59 Dig within. Within is the fountain of good; ever dig, and it will ever well forth water.

60 Keep the body as well as the face in control, and avoid contortions, either when in motion or at rest. In the face understanding exhibits itself by preserving intelligence and comeliness, and we must make the same demand of the body as a whole. It needs no practised artifice to ensure this much.

61 Life is more like wrestling than dancing; it must be ready to keep its feet against all onsets however unexpected.

Always be clear whose approbation it is you wish 62
to secure, and what their inner principles are. Then you will not find fault with unintended blunders; neither will you need credentials from them, when you look into the well-springs of their views and impulses.

"*No soul*," says the philosopher,[1] "*wilfully misses* 63
*truth*"; no nor justice either, nor wisdom, nor charity, nor any other excellence. It is essential to remember this continually; it will make you gentler with every one.

In sickness or pain remind yourself that it cannot 64
demean or vitiate your pilot understanding; it does not impair it on the universal or the social side. In most cases you may find support in the saying of Epicurus, that "pain cannot be past bearing or everlasting, if only you bear in mind its limits, and do not let fancy supplement them." Remember too that many things which surprise us out of patience are really in the same category as pain—stupor for instance, feverishness, or want of appetite. Whenever any of these makes you discontent, say to yourself that you are giving in to pain.

Do not you feel towards the inhuman, as human 65
beings too often do to one another.

How do we know that Telauges was not morally 66
superior to Socrates? It proves nothing that Socrates died a more notable death, or had more talent for dialectics, or showed more endurance on a frosty night, or had the spirit to resist when ordered to

[1] Plato, as twice quoted by Epictetus, *Arr.* 1, 28, 2 and 22.

arrest Leon, or that he 'perked his head' [1] in the streets. On all this one may have one's doubts, even assuming it true; the one important consideration is, what sort of soul had Socrates? could he rest content with being just to men, and holy towards the gods? did he on the one hand resent men's evil-doing or fall in bondage to another's ignorance? did he on the other accept the portion assigned, not as something counter to nature or too grievous to be borne? and did he keep the affections of the mind distinct from the affections of the flesh?

67 In commingling mind with the other elements of the compound, nature did not forbid it power of self-determination, and supremacy within its own domain. A man may easily enough be godlike, yet never be recognised as such. Ever remember this, and also that true happiness lies in a very few things. Do not, because dialectic and physics lie beyond your ken, despair on that account of freedom, self-respect, unselfishness, and tractability to god.

68 Live life out unrebelliously in perfect peace, though the whole world bawl its wishes at you, yes though wild beasts tear limb by limb this material integument of flesh. Amid it all nothing can prevent your understanding from possessing itself in calm, in true judgment upon each besetting claim, and in ready use of all material at its disposal. So that judgment may say to circumstance, 'This is what you intrinsically are, though you may get credit for being something different': and use may

[1] Cf. Plato, *Symp.* 221 B, from Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 362.

say to opportunity, 'You are what I was looking for. For whatever comes to hand is material for the practice of rational and social virtue, in a word of that art which is proper to man or god.' All that befalls is so much assimilative material for god or man, never novel or impracticable, but familiar and apt for use.

Herein is the way of perfection—to live out each 69
day as one's last, with no fever, no torpor, and no acting a part.

The immortal gods do not lose patience at having 70
to bear age after age with the froward generations of men; but still show for them all manner of concern. Shall you, whose end is in a moment, lose heart? you, who are one of the froward?

It is absurd, not to fly from one's own evil-doing, 71
which is possible, but to fly from others', which is impossible.

Whatever the rational and social faculty finds 72
devoid of mind or social aim, it reasonably accounts inferior to itself.

You have done a kindness, another has received 73
it; why be as the foolish and hanker after something more, the credit for the kindness, or the recompense?

No one tires of service rendered. Service is ac- 74
tion after nature's way. Do not tire then of service gained by service given.

The impulse of Nature made for a world of order. 75
All that now happens follows in the train of consequence; else you must deny reason to the sovereign ends which guide the impulse of the World-soul. This thought will oftentimes minister calm.

# BOOK VIII

AEQUANIMITAS—*Antoninus*

1 One good corrective to vainglory is to remember that you cannot claim to have lived your entire life, nor even from youth up, as a philosopher. To many another it is no secret, and no secret to yourself, how far you fall short of philosophy. Having touched pitch, it is hard for you still to win the title of philosopher: and your position militates against it. Now that your eyes are really open to what the facts are, never mind what others think of you; be self-content, if only for life's remainder, just so long as nature wills you to live on. You have but to apprehend that will, and let nothing else distract you: you have tried much, and in misguided ways, and nowhere have you found the happy life; not in systems, nor wealth, nor fame, nor self-indulgence, nowhere. Where then is happiness? in doing that which man's nature craves. How do it? by holding principles, from which come endeavours and actions. What principles? principles touching good and bad—to wit, that nothing is good for a man, which does not make him just, temperate, brave, free; nothing evil, that does not produce the opposite results.

2 Of every action ask yourself, What does it mean for me? shall I repent of it? A little while and I am dead, and there is an end of all. Why crave for

more, if only the work I am about is worthy of a being intellectual, social-minded, and on a par with god?

Alexander, Cæsar, Pompey, what are they com- 3
pared with Diogenes, Heraclitus, Socrates? The latter saw into things and what things were made of, and their Inner Selves were at one; as for the former, how much foresight did they possess, and in how much were they slaves?

Protest—till you burst! Men will go on all the 4
same.

First and foremost, keep unperturbed. For all 5
things follow the law of Nature: and in a little while you will vanish and be nought, even as are Hadrian and Augustus. Secondly, face facts open-eyed, bearing in mind that it is your duty to be a man and to be good; what man's nature demands, that do without swerving; so speak, as seems to you most just; only be it considerately, modestly, and with sincerity.

It is Nature's work to shift and to transpose, to 6
remove thence and to carry thither. All is change; yet need we not fear any novelty; all is the wonted round; nay even the apportionments equal.

Every nature finds content in pursuing the tenor 7
of its way: and the reasoning nature moves on its own way, when in impressions it yields assent to nothing false or insecure; when it directs impulse towards social action only; when it confines inclination and avoidance to things within our power; and when it welcomes every apportionment of universal

nature. For of this it is a part, as the nature of the leaf is part of the nature of the plant; only that leaf-nature is part of nature without sense or reason and liable to contravention, while man-nature is part of nature that is above contravention, possessed of mind, and just; seeing that it apportions to successive men, equally and by scale of worth, their participation in time, being, cause, action, and circumstance. Only do not look for exact equality in every case between individual and individual, but in comparing the sum totals of collective wholes.

8 Know everything you cannot; but check arrogance you can, rise superior to pleasures or pains you can, spurn reputation you can, keep your temper with the stupid and the ingrate, yes even care for them, you can.

9 For the future let none hear you reviling court-life, nor you yourself.

10 Repentance is self-reproach at having let slip something of use. Now all good must be of use, and the good man's object in life; but no good man would ever repent of having let a pleasure slip; pleasure therefore is neither of use, nor good.

11 Of any particular thing ask, What is it in itself, and by its constitution? what in substance and in matter? what in respect of cause? what is it doing in the world? and for how long does it subsist?

12 When you are drowsy and waking comes hard, remind yourself that social action belongs to your constitution and to human nature, while sleep is a function shared by unreasoning animals. And that

which belongs to the particular nature, is more proper and organic to it, and likewise more congenial.

To every impression apply, if possible, the tests 13
of objective character, of subjective effect, and of logical relation.

Whomsoever you meet, say straightway to your- 14
self—What are the man's principles of good and bad? for if he holds such and such principles regarding pleasure and pain and their respective causes, about fame and shame, or life and death, I shall not be surprised or shocked at his doing such and such things: I shall remember that he cannot do otherwise.

Think of being shocked at the fig-tree bearing figs! 15
you have just as little right, remember, to be shocked at the world bearing the produce proper to it. Shame on the physician or the pilot who is shocked at a case of fever, or a contrary wind.

Remember that to change your course and to 16
accept correction is no surrender of freedom. Your action follows your own impulse and judgment, and keeps the course which your own mind sets.

If the fault rests with you, why do it? if with 17
another, with what do you find fault? the atoms, or the gods? Either is idiotcy. Find fault with nobody. If you can, set the doer right; if that is impossible, at least set the thing right; if even that cannot be, to what purpose is your fault-finding? For everything must have some purpose.

That which dies does not drop out of the universe. 18
Here it bides, and here too it changes and is dis-

persed into its elements, the rudiments of the universe and of yourself. And they too change, and murmur not.

19 Everything—horse, vine, or what not—exists for some end. Marvel not that even the Sun says, 'I have a work to do,' and so too the other gods. What then is yours? Pleasure? Is the thought tolerable?

20 Nature has an aim in everything, in its cessation no less than its first beginning or continuance. It is like one casting a ball. What good, pray, is it to the ball to rise, what harm to drop, or even to lie fallen? what good to the bubble to hold together, or what harm to burst? so likewise with a candle.

21 Turn a thing inside out, and see what it is like; or what it becomes like when old or diseased or in decay. Short-lived are praiser and praised alike, remembrancer and remembered: and that too only in a corner of one continent, and even there all are not in accord with one another, or even with themselves: and even the whole earth is but a point.

22 Attend to what you have in hand—whether material object, or moral principle, or action, or the meaning of what is said.

It serves you right. You prefer becoming good to-morrow to being good to-day.

23 Acting—let me refer all to the service of men: bearing—let me take what comes, referring all to the gods, and to the universal source, from which all things that come to pass concatenate.

24 Think of bathing and its accessories—oil, sweat,

filth, foul water, and all things nauseating. So is it with every part of life, and each material thing.

First Verus, then Lucilla; first Maximus, then 25
Secunda; first Diotimos, then Epitynchanos; first Faustina, then Antoninus. And so always. First Hadrian, then Celer. The keen wits that were, the prophets, or the magnates, where are they now? keen wits like Charax, Demetrius the Platonist, Eudaimon and the like. All lived their little day, all long since dead; some denied even brief remembrance, some passed into a tale; or fading ere now out of tales. Think on these things, and remember that either your mortal compound must be dispersed into its atoms, or else the breath of life must be extinguished, or be transmuted and enter a new order.

Man's mirth is to do man's proper work; and it 26
is proper to man to wish well to his kind, to rise superior to the motions of sense, to distinguish impressions that are plausible, and to survey at large Nature and her processes.

Man has three relations: first to the physical or- 27
gan, his material shell: secondly, to the divine cause, from which proceed all things for all; thirdly, to those with whom he has to do.

Pain is either an evil for the body—and if so, let 28
body state its case; or for the soul—but the soul can maintain its own unclouded calm, and refuse to view it as evil. For every judgment or impulse or inclination or avoidance is within, and nothing evil can force entrance there.

29 Efface impressions, reiterating to yourself—It rests now with me, that within this soul of mine there be no vice, nor desire, nor any perturbation at all; perceiving the true nature of all things, I use each at its proper worth. Remember this prerogative is yours by nature.

30 Alike in Senate and in individual intercourse, let your language be dignified, but not elaborate; your words all sound.

31 Look at the court of Augustus—wife, daughter, children, grandsires, sister, Agrippa, kinsmen, intimates, friends, Areius, Maecenas, physicians, priests—the whole circle dead. Pass again to other instances, to the death not of an individual, but of a stock, such as the Pompeii, and to the superscription graven upon tombs—LAST OF HIS LINE: reflect how hard his forefathers strained, to leave behind them a successor; and how after all there needs must be a last; and here finally the extinction of a long line.

32 In every single action try to make life a whole: if each, so far as it can, contributes its part, be satisfied; and that, no man can hinder.—'Some outer obstacle,' you say, 'will interfere.'—'Nay, but nothing can touch the justice, wisdom, reasonableness of the intention.'—'But may not some form of action be prevented?'—'Possibly; but by welcoming that prevention, and with a good grace adopting the alternative, you at once substitute a course that will fit into its place in the whole we have in view.'

33 Modestly take, cheerfully resign.

Have you ever seen a dismembered hand, or foot, 34
or decapitated head, lying severed from the body to which it belonged? Such does a man, so far as he can, make himself, when he refuses to accept what befalls, and isolates himself, or when he pursues self-seeking action. You are cast out from the unity of nature, of which you are an organic part; you dismember your own self. But here is this beautiful provision, that it is in your power to re-enter the unity. No other part of the whole doth god privilege, when once severed and dismembered, to reunite. But consider the goodness of god, with which he has honoured man: he has put it in his power never to be sundered at all from the whole; and if sundered, then to rejoin it once more, and coalesce, and resume his contributory place.

Each rational being shares (speaking generally) 35
the attributes of rational nature at large, among others the following: as rational nature continually modifies each form of obstruction or resistance, subordinates it to the scheme of destiny, and so incorporates it with itself, so too can the rational being convert each hindrance into material for himself, and use it to further his endeavour.

Do not let the impression of life as a whole con- 36
found you. Do not focus in one all the train of possible and painful consequences; but as each trouble comes, say to yourself—What is there here too hard to bear or to endure? and you will be ashamed to avow it so. And yet again remember, that you have not to bear up against the future or the past, but al-

ways against the present only. And even that you minimise, when you strictly circumscribe it to itself, and repudiate moral inability to hold out merely against that.

37 Does Pantheia or does Pergamus still sit beside the bier of Verus? Chabrias or Diotimos by Hadrian's? Folly! And suppose they did, would the dead be conscious of it? or if conscious, glad? or if glad, would the mourners live on for ever? must they not in the order of things first turn into old men and women, and then die? and when they died, what could their lovers do next? All comes to stench and refuse at last.

38 If you have sharp eyes, see and discern the inly wise.

39 In the constitution of the reasoning being I perceive no virtue in mutiny against justice; in mutiny against pleasure I see self-control.

40 Take away your own view of what you regard as painful, and you stand unassailable. 'But of what *you* is this true?'—'Of reason.'—'But reason and I are not the same.'—'Very good: then spare reason the pain of giving itself pain; and if some other part of you is amiss, let it keep that view to itself.'

41 A contravention of sense is an injury to the life-nature; so likewise is a contravention of impulse; and similarly with any other form of contravention or injury to the natural constitution. In the same way any contravention of mind is an injury to the mind-nature. Apply all this to yourself. Are you affected by pain or pleasure? Sensation must see

to that. Has impulse or endeavour suffered some check? Well, if it was without reservation, you therein did reason a wrong; accept the universal limitation, and forthwith the injury or contravention vanishes. But the freehold of the mind none other may contravene; fire cannot touch it, nor steel, nor tyrant, nor slander, nor any other thing; so long as it abides "posed as a sphere self-orbed."

What right have I to vex myself, when I never 42
yet wilfully vexed another?

To every man his own good cheer. Be mine— 43
health in the Inner Self; estranged from no man, and from no vicissitude of men, let me look on everything and accept everything with charitable eye, and use each according to its worth.

Harvest the present. Those who prefer pursuit 44
of after-fame do not reflect that posterity will be men just like those who gall them now; and that they too will be but mortal. And after all what matters to you the rattle of their voices, or the kind of views they entertain about you?

Take me and cast me where you will. There I 45
shall still have my deity within serene, content so long as it can feel and act after the ordering of its own constitution. Is change of place any good reason for my soul injuring and debasing itself by cringing, or craving, or cowering, or flinching? What indeed is worth that?

Nothing can befall a man that is not incidental 46
to men; nor a cow, nor a vine, nor a stone, that is not proper to cows, vines, or stones. Why chafe

then at the occurrence of that which is customary and natural to each? Nature brings nothing that you cannot bear.

47 If you are pained by anything without, it is not the thing agitates you, but your own judgment concerning the thing; and this it is in your own power to efface. If the pain comes from inward state and disposition, who hinders you from correcting the principle at fault? If however the pain consists in not taking some action which you perceive to be wholesome, why not act rather than prolong the pain?—'But some obstacle stronger than yourself bars the way.'—'Then grieve not; the responsibility for inaction does not lie with you.'—'But life is not worth living, with the act undone.'—'If so, take kindly leave of life, serenely owning the obstacle and dying even as he dies who succeeds.'

48 Remember that your Inner Self is inexpugnable, when once it rallies to itself and consistently declines to act against its will, even though the defiance may be irrational. How much more then, when its judgment is rational and made with circumspection? Therefore the mind free from passions is a citadel; man has no stronger fortress to which he can fly for refuge and remain impregnable. Ignorant is he, who has not seen this; unhappy he, who, having seen, yet flies not to the refuge.

49 Do not draw inferences in excess of that which the primary impressions announce. They announce, 'So and so in speaking ill of you'; yes, but they do not add that you are thereby injured: or, 'I see my

child is sick': yes, but that there is danger, I do not see. Always keep strictly to the first impressions, without adding comments of your own, and you are unaffected. Or rather, add from within the recognition that all is part of the world-order.

The gourd is bitter; drop it then! There are 50
brambles in the path: then turn aside! It is enough. Do not go on to argue, Why pray have these things a place in the world? The natural philosopher will laugh at you, just as a carpenter or cobbler would laugh, if you began finding fault because you saw chips or parings lying about their shop. And yet they have a place for the rubbish; but Nature has nothing outside herself. Herein is the marvel of her handiwork, that thus self-circumscribed she yet transmutes into herself every content that seems corrupt and old and useless, and from the same materials recreates afresh: so as to avoid the need of fresh substance from without, or of some place for her refuse. Her own space, her own material, and her own handiwork suffice.

In action, not dilatory; in intercourse, not indis- 51
criminate; in impressions, not rambling; your soul neither numb with constraint, nor fevered with transports; your life, undriven.

Say men kill you, quarter you, pursue you with execrations: what has that to do with your understanding remaining pure, lucid, temperate, just? It is as though a man stood beside some sweet transparent fountain, abusing it, and it ceased not to well forth draughts of pure water; nay though he

cast in mud and filth, it will speedily disperse them and wash them forth and take no stain. How then can you create a living fountain within? imbue yourself in freedom every hour, with charity, simplicity, and self-respect.

52 He who knows not the world-order, knows not his own place therein. And he who knows not for what end he exists, knows not himself nor the world. He who fails in either knowledge, cannot so much as say for what he himself exists. What think you then of him, who seeks or shuns the clatter of men, who understand not where or what they are?

53 Would you have the praises of him who thrice an hour execrates himself? Would you satisfy the man who cannot satisfy himself? And can a man satisfy himself, who repents of nigh everything he does?

54 You breathe the air that encompasses you: think likewise with the all-encompassing mind. Mind-power is no less all-pervading and diffused for him who can draw therefrom, than the atmosphere for respiration.

55 Evil-doing does not hurt the universe at large: evil to one part does not hurt another. It is hurtful to the evil-doer only, and release from it is within his reach as soon as he so wills.

56 To my moral will my neighbour's will is as completely unrelated, as his breath is or his flesh. Be we ever so much made for one another, our Inner Selves have each their own sovereign rights: otherwise my neighbour's evil might become my evil, which is not god's good pleasure, lest another have power to undo me.

We see the sun everywhere diffused and all-per- 57
vading, yet unexhausted. For its diffusion is by extension: the very word rays is derived from their power of reaching forth.[1] The nature of a ray you may see, if you watch sunlight admitted through a chink into a darkened room: for it extends straight on, and supports itself on any solid object which encounters it and disparts it from the air beyond; there it remains, and does not slip or fall. Such too should be the effusion and diffusion of the understanding, never exhausting but ever extending itself, not impinging furiously and violently upon the hindrances which it encounters; yet never failing or falling, but resting there and illuminating that which receives it. That which refuses to transmit it, will but deprive itself of light.

He who fears death, fears either loss of sensation 58
or change of sensation. But if sensation ceases, you will feel no evil; if sensation is changed in kind, you will be a changed creature, and will not cease to live.

Men exist for one another. Teach them then, or 59
bear with them.

There is motion and motion—the motion of the 60
arrow, and the motion of mind. Yet mind, even when it works cautiously and plays around some problem, is none the less moving straight on, towards its appointed end.

Enter into every man's Inner Self: and let every 61
other man enter into thine.

1 ἀκτῖνες from ἐκτείνεσθαι—a false etymology.

# BOOK IX

DUCUNT VOLENTEM FATA, NOLENTEM TRAHUNT—
*Seneca*

1 To be unjust is to sin. By Nature rational beings have been constituted for one another's sake, each to help each according to its worth, and in no wise to hurt: and he who transgresses the will of Nature, sins—to wit, against the primal deity.

And to lie is to sin against the same godhead. For Nature is the nature of all things that are; and things that are have union with all things from the beginning. Truth is indeed one name for Nature, the first cause of all things true. The wilful liar sins in that he deceives and does unjustly; the unwitting, in that he is at variance with Nature, disordering and combating the order of the universe. For he who goes counter to the truth is at civil war within; he has neglected the faculties provided by nature, and cannot any longer distinguish false from true.

Again, to seek pleasures as good, or to shun pains as evil, is to sin. For it inevitably leads to complaining against Nature for unfair awards to the virtuous and to the vile, seeing that the vile are oftentimes in pleasure and come by things pleasurable, while the virtuous are overtaken by pain and things painful. Moreover, he who fears pain will

some time fear that which will form part of the world-order; and therein he sins. And he who seeks after pleasures will not abstain from unjust doing; which is palpably an act of sin. Where Nature makes no difference—and were she not indifferent, she would not bring both to pass—those who would fain walk with nature should conform their wills to like indifference. Not to be indifferent to pain or pleasure, death or life, evil report or good report, all which Nature treats indifferently, is plainly to be guilty of sin. By Nature treating them indifferently, I mean that they befall indifferently all whose existence is consequent upon the original impulse of providence, which gave the origin and first momentum to the cosmic ordering of things, by selecting certain germs of future existences, and assigning to them productive capacities of realisation, change, and phenomenal succession.

2 The truly gentle would pass from among men untainted by falsehood, insincerity, luxury, or pride: and next best is, to grow disgusted with these things before one breathes one's last. Or can it be, that you are resolved to cleave fast to evil, and that even experience does not prevail upon you to shun the pestilence? For corruption of the understanding is a pestilence more deadly far than any distemper or phase of the surrounding atmosphere. That is death to animals, as animals; but this to men, as men.

3 Contemn not death, but give it welcome; is not death too a part of nature's will? As youth and

age, as growth and prime, as the coming of teeth and beard and grey hairs, as begetting and pregnancy and bearing of children, as all other operations of nature, even all that 'life in its seasons brings to pass,' even such is dissolution. Therefore the rational man should not treat death with impatience or repugnance or disdain, but wait for it as one of nature's operations. Just as now you wait for the offspring to issue from your wife's womb, so expect the hour when your atom of soul will slip its mortal case. If your heart asks for some simple and effective reassurance, the best solace against death is correct appreciation of the material things from which you are to part, and of the moral natures with which your soul will then cease to intermingle. Far be it from you to take offence at them; nay rather, care for them and deal gently with them; yet remember, that you are parting with men whose principles are not your principles. The one thing, if any, which could hold you back and chain you still to life, would be companionship with kindred spirits. As it is, amid the besetting worry and jangle of life, you cry, 'Come quickly, death, for fear I too forget myself!'

4 He who sins, sins against himself; he who does wrong, wrongs himself, making himself evil.

5 Wrong comes often of not doing as well as doing.

6 Certitude in present view, unselfishness in present act, present acceptance of all that overtakes you from without—have these, and it suffices you.

Efface impression; stay impulse; quench inclination; be master of your Inner Self. 7

The soul distributed among the irrational animals is one, and so too is the soul instinct with mind, that is portioned out among the rational; just as earth is one in all things earthy, and the light one by which we see, and the air one which we breathe, even all that have sight and breath of life. 8

Things that share a common element feel the impulse of kind towards kind. The earthy ever gravitates towards earth, the aqueous seeks its own level, and so too the aerial; nothing short of force can dispart them. Fire ascends attracted by the elemental fire; so ready is it always to combine for ignition, that every solid, in proportion to its dryness, readily ignites, that which hinders ignition showing itself the weaker ingredient. So too everything which participates in the common mind-nature feels the like impulse towards kind; nay more so—for the higher the nature, the readier the impulse to combination and fusion with its counterpart. For observe; among the irrational animals, bees swarm, cattle herd, birds nest together, all owning forms of love. For at this stage soul is present, and on this higher plane of being a mutual attraction asserts itself, which is not present in plants or stones or sticks. Again among rational beings there are societies and friendships, homes and communities, and in war compacts and armistices. In the still higher orders of being, even among distant bodies there exists unity of a kind, as among the stars; so 9

that ascent in the scale of being induces sympathetic action in spite of distance. See what we come to then. None but things possessed of mind ignore the mutual impulse of attraction; here only does the natural gravitation disappear. Yes, but even in the act of evasion, men are caught and overtaken; nature prevails. Watch, and you will see: sooner will you find some particle of earth detached from other earth, than man isolated from man.

10 Man bears fruit, so does god, so does the world, all in their own season. That custom has appropriated the term to the vine or the like, matters not. Reason too bears fruit, alike for the world and for itself; and from it spring fruits of like kind with reason itself.

11 Convert men, if you can: if you cannot, charity, remember, has been given you for this end. See! the gods too have charity for such, helping them to divers things, health, wealth and reputation; so good are they. You too can do the same; who hinders you?

12 Work hard, not making a martyr of yourself, and not seeking pity or applause: seek one thing only, action or inaction, as social law demands.

13 To-day I got clear of trouble; say rather, I cleared trouble out; the trouble was not without but within, a matter of views.

14 All things are alike—familiar, fleeting, foul: everything as it was in the days of the dead and buried.

15 Facts stand outside us, just as they are, knowing nothing and stating nothing about themselves.

What is it states the case for them? the Inner Self.

For a rational and social being good and evil lie 16
not in physical affection but in moral action, just as virtue and vice lie not in an affection, but in action.

To the thrown stone it is no ill to drop, nor good 17
to rise.

Penetrate to men's Inner Selves, and you will see 18
what judges you fear, and how they judge themselves.

Everything is in change. You yourself are under- 19
going continuous variation, and piecemeal destruction. So is the world at large.

Another's error—let it lie. 20

In cessation of action, in surcease of impulse or 21
of judgment, in what may be termed their death, there is no evil. Retraverse the stages of growth, childhood, boyhood, youth, age—each one of them a change, a death. Is there anything to be afraid of? Or retraverse the periods of life, first under your grandfather, then under your mother, then your father. Gather up all the many phases and changes and cessations of experience, and then ask yourself, Is there anything to be afraid of? No more is there in the cessation, the surcease, the change from life itself.

Press straight to the Inner Self—your own, the 22
world's, your neighbour's. Your own, that you may make of it a true vessel of justice; the world's, that you may bear in mind of what you are a part; your neighbour's, that you may understand whether

it is ignorance or knowledge, and may take into account the bond of brotherhood.

23 You are part of a social whole, a factor necessary to complete the sum; therefore your every action should help to complete the social life. Any action of yours that does not tend, directly or remotely, to this social end, dislocates life and infringes its unity. It is an act of sedition, and like some separatist doing what he can to break away from civic accord.

24 Children's squabbles, a stage farce, and "*poor breath carrying a corpse*"! is not phantom-land more palpable and solid?

25 Get to the cause and its quality; isolate it from the material embodiment and survey it; then delimit the full span for which the individuality in question can subsist.

26 "*Woes unnumbered you have borne*"—because you are not content to let your Inner Self follow the law of its own being. Hold! enough!

27 When others censure, or resent, or make an outcry over this or that, go near and penetrate into their souls, and see what manner of men they are. You will see there is no need for straining to commend yourself to their good opinion. Yet kindliness remains a duty; love is nature's claim. And see! the gods aid them in all manner of ways, by dream and by oracle, yes even to gain the ends on which they are bent.

28 Up and down, to and fro, moves the world's round, from age to age. Either the World-mind imparts each individual impulse—in which case, ac-

cept the impulse it imparts: or else it gave the impulse once for all, with all its long entail of consequence. It comes to this—either a concourse of atoms, or an appointment of destiny. In fine, either god works, and all is well; or, if all is random, be not you too a part of the random.

Anon earth will cover us all; then earth in its turn will change; then the resultant of the change; then the resultant of the resultant, and so *ad infinitum*. The billows of change and variation roll apace, and he who ponders them will feel contempt for all things mortal. The universal cause is like a winter torrent; it sweeps all before it.

How cheap in sooth are these pygmies of politics, 29
these sage doctrinaires in statecraft! Drivellers every one. Well, man, what then? This and this only: do what nature here and now demands. Endeavour the best you may; do not look round for your cue to some one else. Do not hope for Utopia; suffice it, if the smallest thing makes head: to compass that one issue, believe, is no small feat. Which of them all changes one moral principle? And without change of principles, what hope for them but bondage and growling and lip-profession? Go to, with your Alexander and Philip and Demetrius of Phalerum; whether they saw the will of Nature, and schooled themselves accordingly, is their affair; but because they strutted their parts, no one has condemned me to follow suit. Simplicity and modesty are the work of philosophy; do not lead me away into self-conceit.

30 "*As from some eminence survey the countless herds*" of men—their thronging festivals, their voyages of storm and voyages of calm, the chequered phases of their appearance, action, disappearance; or imagine again the life of ages past, the life of generations to come, the life now living among savage tribes; how many have never heard your name, how many will at once forget it! how many who perhaps applaud you now, will very soon revile! how valueless in sooth is memory, or fame, or all else put together!

31 To vicissitudes caused from without, be imperturbable: in actions whose cause lies with yourself, be just—in other words, let impulse and act make social action their one end, and so fulfil the law of nature.

32 The agitations that beset you are superfluous, and depend wholly upon judgments of your own. You can get rid of them, and in so doing will indeed live at large, by embracing the whole universe in your view and comprehending all eternity and imagining the swiftness of change in each particular, seeing how brief is the passage from birth to dissolution, birth with its unfathomable before, dissolution with its infinite hereafter.

33 All things you see will soon have perished, and those who have watched them perishing will soon perish themselves: the longest-lived will be at one with the babe who dies untimely.

34 Look at their Inner Selves, the things they push for, the titles to their liking and respect. Conceive

their souls stripped naked—and then, fancy their censure hurting, or their plaudits doing any good!

Loss is another word [1] for change; and change 35
is the joy of Nature. By Nature all things are ordered well, all were of the same form from the beginning, all will be like to everlasting. Why then say that all things have been, that all things ever will be evil, that among all the gods no power has ever been devised to set them right, but that the world is doomed to labour under interminable ills?

Decay is in the material substance of all things— 36
water, dust, bones, and stench! What is marble but knobs of earth? gold or silver but sediment? raiment but tags of hair? purple but shell-fish blood? and so on throughout. Yes even the pneumatic current is in the same case, ever changing from this to that.

Enough of moans, and murmurs, and monkey- 37
chatter! Why perturb yourself? There is nothing new, to excite you so. The cause, is it? Look the cause then in the face. Or the material substance? Then look that in the face. Cause, or substance—it can be nothing else. You have only, as in god's sight, to be once for all more simple and more good. Whether you witness it for a hundred years or three is just the same.

If he did wrong, with him lies the evil. Suppose 38
after all he did not!

Either all things spring from a single source pos- 39
sessed of mind, and combine and fit together as for

[1] The word-play of the original—*ἀποβολή, μεταβολή*—cannot be reproduced.

a single body, and in that case the part has no right to quarrel with the good of the whole: or else, it is a concourse of atoms, a welter ending in dispersion. Why then perturb yourself?

Say to your Inner Self, Are you dead, perished, false to yourself? are you mere beast, one of the herd, chewing the cud?

40 The gods either have power or they have not. If they have not, why pray at all? If they have, why not pray for deliverance from the fear, or the desire, or the pain, which the thing causes, rather than for the withholding or the giving of the particular thing? Assuredly, if they can help men at all, this is the way of help. But perhaps you will say, The gods have put all that in my own power. Then is it not better to exercise your power and remain free, rather than to be set on what is not in your own power, and become a slave and cringer? And who told you that the gods do not assist us even to what is in our own power? Begin there with your prayers, and you will see. Instead of 'Oh! to enjoy her caresses!'—pray you against lusting after the enjoyment. Instead of 'Rid me of my enemy!'—pray you against desire for the riddance. Instead of 'Spare my little one!'—pray you that your fears may be at rest. Be this the direction of your prayers, and watch what comes.

41 Says Epicurus—'When I was sick, I did not converse about my bodily ailments, nor discuss such matters with my visitors; but continued to dwell upon the principles of natural philosophy, and more

particularly how the understanding, while participating in such disturbances of the flesh, yet remains in unperturbed possession of its proper good. And I would not,' he adds, 'give the doctors a chance of blustering and making ado, but let life go on cheerily and well.' Imitate Epicurus—in sickness, if you are sick, or in any other visitation. To be loyal to philosophy under whatsoever circumstances, and not join the babel of the silly and the ignorant, is a motto for all schools alike. Stick only to the work in hand, and to the tool you have for doing it.

When some piece of shamelessness offends you, 42
ask yourself, Can the world go on without shameless people?—Certainly not!—Then do not ask for the impossible. Here you see is one of the shameless, whom the world cannot get on without. Similarly in any case of foul play or breach of faith or any other wrong, fall back on the same thought. When once you remember that the genus cannot be abolished, you will be more charitable to the individual. Another helpful plan is, at once to realise what virtue nature has given to man to cope with the wrong. For she provides antidotes, such as gentleness to cope with the graceless, and other salves for other irritants. You can always try to convert the misguided; for indeed every wrongdoer is really misguided and missing his proper mark. Besides what harm has he done to you? for look—none of the objects of your ire has done anything that can inflict injury upon your understanding; yet there, and there only, can evil or hurt to you

find realisation. What is there wrong, pray, or shocking, in the clown acting the clown? See that the fault does not lie rather at your own door, for not expecting him to go wrong thus. Reason supplied you with faculties enabling you to expect that he would go wrong thus; you forgot, and then are surprised at his having done so. When you complain of some breach of faith or gratitude, take heed first and foremost to yourself. Obviously the fault lies with yourself, if you had faith that a man of that disposition would keep faith, or if in doing a kindness you did not do it upon principle, nor upon the assumption that the kind act was to be its own reward. What more do you want in return for a service done? Is it not enough to have acted up to nature, without asking wages for it? Does the eye demand a recompense for seeing, or the feet for walking? Just as this is the end for which they exist, and just as they find their reward in realising the law of their being, so too man is made for kindness, and whenever he does an act of kindness or otherwise helps forward the common good, he thereby fulfils the law of his being and comes by his own.

# BOOK X

## ASPICE · RESPICE · PROSPICE

WILT thou one day, O my soul, be good and simple, 1
all one, all naked, clearer to sight than this thy material shell? Wilt thou taste one day a fond and satisfied contentment? Wilt thou one day be full and without lack, craving naught and coveting naught, neither things with breath nor things without, for indulgence of self-pleasing? neither time, for prolongation of enjoyment? nor region, place or clime, nor sweet society of fellow-men? Wilt thou be content with thine actual estate? happy in all thou hast? convinced that all things are thine, that all is well with thee, that all comes from the gods, that all must be well which is their good pleasure, and which they bring to pass for the salvation of the living whole, good, just and beautiful, from which all things have their being, their unity and their scope, and into which they are received at dissolution for the production of new forms of being like themselves? Wilt thou be such one day, my soul, having attained such fellowship with gods and men, as to make no more complaint at all, nor be found of them in any fault?

Take heed to what your personal nature craves, 2
knowing that you are solely at nature's disposition; comply with it and do it, unless it involves injury

to your animal nature. But correspondently, give heed to each craving of the animal nature and accept it in full, unless it involves injury to your nature as a rational being: and the rational is *ipso facto* social. Apply these *criteria* to life, and do so without fuss.

3 Whatever befalls, one of two things is true: either you have strength to bear it, or you have not. If what befalls is within your strength, do not lose patience, but use your strength to bear it: if it is beyond your strength, again lose not patience: in destroying you it will cease to exist. Yet remember that you have strength to bear everything, which your own view of the case can render endurable and bearable, if once regarded as a part of interest or of duty to yourself.

4 If a man mistakes, reason with him kindly and point out his misconception. If you cannot prevail, blame yourself, or no one.

5 Whatever befalls was fore-prepared for you from all time; the woof of causation was from all eternity weaving the realisation of your being, and that which should befall it.

6 Be the world atoms, or be it nature's growth, stand assured—first, that I am a part of the whole, at nature's disposition; secondly, that I am related to all the parts of like kind with myself. First then, inasmuch as I am a part, I shall not be discontent with any portion assigned me from the whole: for nothing is hurtful to the part which is good for the whole. The whole contains nothing which is not

for its own good; this is true of all nature's growths, with this addition in the case of the world-nature, that there is no external cause compelling it to generate anything hurtful to itself. Thus in the thought that I am a part of such a whole, I shall accept gladly all that comes to pass. And, secondly, in so far as I own my relation to the parts of like kind with myself, I shall do nothing for self-seeking, but shall make all such parts the aim of my endeavour, directing every impulse towards the common good, and diverting it from the contrary. So long as I pursue this course, life must perforce flow smooth, smooth as the ideal life of one ever occupied in the well-being of his fellow-citizens, and accepting gladly whatever the city assigns him as his portion.

7 The parts of the whole, which are comprehended in the growth and nature of the world-order, must necessarily perish—that is to say must undergo variation of form. Now if such variation is in its nature at once evil and necessary for the parts, how can the whole escape deterioration, seeing that the parts are prone to variation, and so constituted as to perish in a variety of ways? Did nature, we ask, purposely intend the injury of things which are part of herself, and make them liable, nay necessarily incident, to injury? or were such results unforeseen by nature? Neither supposition is credible. But suppose, dropping the term nature, we explain them as the natural course of things, see the absurdity; we first speak of change as natural to the parts of the universe, and then in the same breath

express surprise or resentment as though at some unnatural procedure, while all the time dissolution is merely into the original elements of composition. For dissolution means either dispersion of the elements of which I was compounded, or else a change from solid into earthy and from pneumatic into aerial, this being the mode of re-assumption into the universal reason, whether its destiny be cyclic conflagration or alternations of eternal renovation. And do not regard the solid or the pneumatic elements as a natal part of being; they are but accretions of yesterday or the day before, derived from food and respiration. The change affects that which is received from without, not the original offspring of the mother's womb. But even admitting that you are intimately bound up with that by your individuality, that does not affect the present argument.

8 You claim for yourself the attributes good, modest, true, open-minded, even-minded, high-minded: take care not to belie them. And should you forfeit them, make haste to reclaim them. The open mind, remember, should import discriminating observation and attention; the even mind unforced acceptance of the apportionments of Nature; the high mind sovereignty of the intelligence over the physical currents, smooth or rough, over vain-glory, death, or any other trial. Keep true to these attributes, without pining for recognition of the same by others, and a changed man you will enter upon a changed life. To go on being what you have been

hitherto, to lead a life still so distracted and polluted, were stupidity and cowardice indeed, worthy of the mangled gladiators who, torn and disfigured, cry out to be remanded till the morrow, to be flung once more to the same fangs and claws. Enter your claim then to these few attributes. And if stand fast in them you can, stand fast—as one translated indeed to Islands of the Blessed. But if you find yourself falling away and beaten in the fight, be a man and get away to some quiet corner, where you can still hold on, or in the last resort take leave of life, not angrily but simply, freely, modestly, achieving at least this much in life, brave leaving of it. Towards bearing these attributes in mind, it will greatly assist you to keep in mind the gods, to remember that they desire not flattery, but rather that all reasoning beings should come unto their likeness, and be as the fig-tree doing fig-tree's work, the dog the dog's, the bee the bee's, and man the man's.

9 A stage-play, a fight, a scramble, a stupor, or a bondage—such is life! and each day will help to efface the sacred principles, which you divest of philosophic regard or allegiance. It is your duty to keep sight and action so alert, as to satisfy each call, to effectualise each perception, and to maintain the full courage of conviction in reserve, but unsuppressed. Ah! when will you find your joy in simple-heartedness? in dignity? in that understanding which apprehends each thing's true being, its position in the world, its term of existence, and its

composition, and which can say to whom it of right belongs, and who can either give it or take away?

10 The spider is proud of catching a fly—so is one man of catching a hare, another of netting a sprat, another boars, or bears, or Sarmatians. Tested by philosophic principles, are they not brigands, every one?

11 Habituate yourself to the perception of all-pervading change; dwell on it continually, and order your thoughts accordingly; nothing more elevates the mind, and emancipates it from the body. He who realises that at any moment he may be called upon to leave the world and to depart from among men, commits himself without reserve to justice in all his actions, to Nature in all that befalls. To what will be said or thought of him, to what will be done against him, he does not give a thought; but is content with two things only—to be just in his dealings and glad at his apportioned lot. Free of all hurry and distractions, he has but one wish—to run the straight course of law, so with a straight course following god.

12 What need for misgivings, when you can see what ought to be done? If all is clear, go forward—considerately, but without swerving; if not, pause and take the best advice; if new resistance meets you, follow the lights of reason and its faculties, holding fast to what is plainly just; success is victory indeed, where in good truth 'default is no defeat.' Unhasting yet unresting, a smiling face yet a firm heart—such is the faithful follower of reason.

Ask yourself as your waking thought, Can it 13
make any difference to me whether another does what is just and right? None whatever. When you hear men blustering praise or blame of others, do not forget what they themselves are in bed and in board, the things they do, the things they shun, the things they seek, their thefts and rapines done not with hands and feet, but with the most precious organ we possess, even that whereby, if we so will, we attain to faith and honour and truth and law and a good god within.

To nature the all-giver and all-taker the schooled 14
and self-respecting mind says—'Give what thou wilt, and take back what thou wilt'—not in any tone of bravado, but solely of obedience and good-will.

The residue of life is short. Live as on a moun- 15
tain. It matters not whether here or there; everywhere you are a citizen of the city of the world. Let men see and witness a true man, a life conformed to nature. If they cannot bear him, let them make away with him. Better that, than life on their terms.

No more mere talk of what the good man should 16
be. Be it!

Embrace in your regard all time and all being— 17
and see that by the side of being, all individual things are but a grain of millet, by that of time as the turn of a screw.

Get a clear understanding of all material things— 18
picture each one of them in dissolution, in change,

and in decay, either by process of dispersion, or by its own appointed mode of death.

19 Eating, sleeping, breeding, excreting—only look at them: look at their lasciviousness and wantonness, their rages and their outbursts of abuse! A while back, to how many did they bow the knee, and for what ends! A little while, and what will be their plight!

20 For each, what Nature brings is best: and best too at the time, when Nature brings it.

21 Earth is in love with rain, and holy æther loves.[1]

Yes, the world-order is in love with fashioning whatever is to be. To the world-order I profess 'Thy love is mine.' Is there not a truth implicit in the familiar 'as it listeth'? [2]

22 Either—You live on where you are: to that you are well used: or—You move off, and so doing have your wish: or—You die, and your service is finished. There is no other alternative. So be of good cheer.

23 Take for your axiom the old truth—the field [3] is where you make it; life here is just the same as life within the field, or on the mountain, or the shore, or where you will. In Plato's own phrase—"*encompassed in his mountain fold, milking his herds.*"

24 What of my Inner Self? what am I making of it

[1] Euripides.

[2] The double meaning of the Greek φιλεῖ, 'loves,' and 'is wont,' has no exact counterpart in English. The adaptation is suggested by a passage of kindred spirit. 'Who took as the type of the true man, the wind?—the wind that blows where it *likes;* and of which no man need ask whence or whither; he may be sure that it is going where it is needed to keep Nature's balance true. Were not the wind's law, law enough for us?'—Hinton, *The Place of the Physician*.

[3] In Marcus Aurelius the 'field' signifies the place of seclusion and retirement, as in iv. § 3. The phrase of Plato is from *Theætetus*, 174 D E.

at this minute? to what use am I putting it? is it empty of mind? divorced and dissociated from the bond of fellowship? is it so ingrown and engrossed in flesh, as to share each shift and change?

The slave who makes away from his master is a 25
runaway; but law is our master; and whoever breaks away from law is a runaway. But vexation, anger, or fear mean refusal of something, past, present or to come, ordained by the sovereign disposer, even Law,[1] who allots[1] to every man his appointed work. So then to be vexed or angry or afeard, is to make one's self a runaway.

The man drops seed into the womb and goes his 26
way, and thereupon a new cause takes up the work and perfects the babe. What a flower of what a seed! Or again, one passes food through the gullet, and thereupon a new cause takes up the work, and makes of it sensation, impulse, in a word life and all forms of vital strength. Consider all that passes within the veil, and perceive the power implied, just as we perceive the upward and downward force of gravitation not with the outward eye, yet no less palpably.

Let imagination remind you how all the varied 27
present does but repeat the past, and rehearse the future. From your own experience, or from the page of history, picture to yourself the same dramas, the self-same scenes reproduced: the court of Hadrian, the court of Antoninus, the court of Philip, Alexander, Crœsus; the same stock *rôles*, only with change of actors.

[1] The Greek plays on the common derivation of *νόμος—νέμειν*.

28 He who feels umbrage or discontent at anything is like a sacrificial pig, which kicks and squeals. And he who sits silent and solitary on his couch, bemoaning our bonds, is in the same case. To the reasonable being and to him only is it vouchsafed to go freely hand in hand with all that comes; the bare act of going with it none can avoid.

29 Point by point, get clear upon every single act you do, and ask yourself, 'Need loss of this make me afraid of death?'

30 When offended at a fault in some one else, divert your thoughts to the reflection, What is the parallel fault in me? Is it attachment to money? or pleasure? or reputation? as the case may be. Dwelling on this, anger forgets itself and makes way for the thought—'He cannot help himself—what else can he do? If it is not so, enable him, if you can, to help himself.'

31 Let sight of Satyron, Eutyches, or Hymen, call up the thought of some Socratic; Euphrates that of Eutychion or Silvanus; Alciphron that of Tropæophorus; Xenophon that of Crito or Severus; a look at yourself, that of some Cæsar of the past; and similarly with every other case, suggesting the thought, Where are they all now? Nowhere—or nobody knows where. In this way you will come to look on all things human as smoke and nothingness: especially if you bear in mind, that the thing once changed can never be itself again to all eternity. Why fret yourself then? Why not be content decently to weather out your little span? What have

you to fear, what form of matter or condition? What are they all, but exercises for reason, facing the facts of life accurately and philosophically? Persevere then, till you make them part of your own being, just as the healthy stomach assimilates its food, or as a blaze of fire turns everything you throw on into flame and light.

Let no man have it in his power to say of you 32
with truth, that you lack simplicity or goodness; make it a lie, for any one to think thus of you. It is within your power: for who can hinder you from being good and simple? You have but to decide to live no longer, if you cannot be such; for in that case reason itself does not dictate it.

Given the material, what can produce the sound- 33
est result in action or in speech? that, whatever it be, is in your power to do or say: and no excuses, please, about being hindered. You will never cease growling, till it comes as natural to you to use all the available materials for fulfilling the law of your being, as it is for pleasure-seekers to choose luxury: every opening for giving our nature play we should view as a form of enjoyment. And the opening is always there. The cylinder indeed cannot always enjoy its proper motion; neither can water, nor fire, nor things which are at the disposition of the lower organic nature or of irrational soul: in their case lets and obstacles abound. But mind and reason have the power of finding a way at will through every impediment. Picture the facility with which reason will find itself a way, as that by which fire

ascends, or a stone drops, or a cylinder rolls downhill—it leaves nothing more to crave for. Remaining interferences either affect the body only, which is a dead thing, or else, apart from the assumptions and admissions of reason itself, have no power to crush or to inflict any injury whatsoever; otherwise the person exposed to them would thereby be injured. For observe—in the case of all other forms of being, any injury befalling them implies deterioration of the object; but in this case the man is one may say bettered and improved, by making good use of circumstances. Nothing in fine can hurt the true citizen, which does not hurt the city; and nothing can hurt the city, which does not first hurt Law. But misadventures so-called hurt not the Law: therefore they hurt not city, nor yet citizen.

34 When once true principles have bitten in, even the shortest and most trite of precepts serves as a safeguard against the spirit of brooding or fear. For instance—

> As wind-shed leaves upon the sod. . . .
> Such are the children of men.[1]

As autumn leaves thy little ones; and as leaves too the crowd who shout their heartening plaudits or heap their curses, or in secret cavil and gibe; as leaves too, those who will succeed to fame hereafter! These all, and the like of them, are but

> Blossoming buds of the spring-time,

[1] Homer, *Il.* vi. 147–8.

which the wind scatters, and a new foliage clothes another wood. Transitoriness is written upon them all; and yet you seek or shun, as though they would last for ever. A little while, and you will close your eyes: and anon the dirge will sound for him who bore your bier.

The healthy eye should see all that meets the 35
sight, and not say, 'I want things green'—the confession of weak eyes. Healthy hearing, healthy smell should be prepared for every sound and every scent; and the healthy stomach too for all kinds of food, no less than the molar for everything which it was made to grind. So too the healthy understanding should be prepared for all that befalls. The mind which cries 'Save my little ones' or 'Let every one applaud each thing I do,' is the eye that wants things green, or the tooth that wants them soft.

No one is so fortunate, but that beside his death- 36
bed there will stand some welcoming the coming blow. He was virtuous, say, and wise. Well, at the last will not one and another say in his heart, 'Now let us breathe again, free of master pedagogue? True, he was never hard on any of us, but I always felt that he was tacitly condemning us.' Such is the reward of the virtuous. But in our case how many other reasons there are, to swell the throng of those who would be quit of us! Realise this as death draws on, and solace your departure with the reflection—I am leaving a life, in which my own associates, for whom I have so striven, prayed and

thought, themselves wish for my removal, hoping that they will perchance gain something in freedom thereby. Why then should one cling to longer sojourn here? Yet do not therefore leave them with any lack of charity; keep true to your own wont, friendly well-wishing and serene, here too not dissociating yourself from others. As in euthanasia the soul slips quietly from the body, so let your departure be. Of these elements nature joined and compounded you: now she dissolves the union. Be it dissolved: I part from what was mine—yet unresisting, unrebelliously; just one step more in nature's course.

37 Whatever is done, and whoever does it, so far as may be, make it a habit to ask the further question, To what does the man's action tend? And begin with yourself, testing yourself first of all.

38 That which pulls the strings, remember, is the power concealed within; there is the mandate, the life, there, one may say, the man. Never confound it with the mere containing shell, and the various appended organs. They may be compared to tools, with this difference, that the connexion is organic. Indeed, apart from the inner cause which dictates action or inaction, the parts are of no more account, than the weaver's shuttle, the writer's pen, or the coachman's whip.

# BOOK XI

*Ζεῦ φύσεως ἀρχηγέ, νόμου μετὰ πάντα κυβερνῶν*—CLEANTHES

*πάντα νομιστί*

THE properties of rational soul—it views itself, de- 1
termines itself, makes itself what it wills, bears and itself reaps its own fruit—while in the vegetable or animal world the fruit is reaped by others—and, finally, attains its proper end at the point where life reaches its term. In a dance or a play or such like, an interruption leaves the action incomplete: but not so with the soul; at every point and wheresoever arrested, she leaves her task fulfilled and self-complete, and can say 'I have come by my own.' Furthermore soul ranges the universe, alike the world of form and the world of void, and reaches forth into eternity, and encompasses and comprehends the cyclic regeneration of the universe, and perceives that our fathers had no fuller vision, neither will our children behold any new thing, but that the man of any understanding who has come to two-score years has in effect beheld the uniformity of all things past and all things to come. And yet another property of rational soul is love of neighbours, truth, self-respect, and that supreme self-reverence which is likewise an attribute of Law. And this implies that the law of Reason is coincident with the law of justice.

2 You will be disenchanted of the delights of song and dance and the pancratium, if once you decompose the melody into its constituent notes, and ask yourself one by one, 'Is this the spell I own?' You will turn from each in disgust. Or analyse dancing in the same way into successions of motion and rest; or do the same with the pancratium. In short, setting aside virtue and virtuous acts, you have but to press analysis to the component parts and you are disenchanted. Apply the process to life too as a whole.

3 O for the soul ready, when the hour of dissolution comes, for extinction or dispersion or survival! But such readiness must proceed from inward conviction, not come of mere perversity, like the Christians', but of a temper rational and grave, and—if it is to convince others—unostentatious.

4 Have I acted unselfishly? Good, I have my reward. Be this your ever-present stay; and weary not.

5 What is your business? to be good. How can you succeed in this but by philosophic views, first of Nature, then of man's own constitution?

6 Tragedy, the first form of drama, drew its lessons from experience, partly as true to the facts of existence, and partly to take the sting, upon the larger stage of life, from things which appeal to the emotions on the stage. For there you see the fulfilment of the just denouement; and also that there is strength to bear even in the agony of *O Cithæron*,

*Cithæron!* [1] And the dramatists give us words of help, such as the exquisite

> Though I and both my sons be spurned of God,
> There is be sure a reason

Or again

> Fret not at circumstances.

Or

> Lives are reaped like ears of corn—

and the like. After tragedy came the old comedy, reprimanding like a schoolmaster, and in its bluff outspoken way usefully rebuking pride; somewhat in the style of like deliverances by Diogenes. Next understand the meaning of middle comedy, and finally of the new comedy, noting to what ends it was applied and how it gradually degenerated into mere mimic diversion. That some good things occur even here, every one knows; but what was the main object and aim of that school of poetry and drama?

Palpably, no condition of life is so well suited for philosophy, as that in which fortune now puts you. 7

A branch lopped from its neighbour branch, is inevitably lopped also from the main trunk. So too a man, isolated from one of his fellow-beings, is severed from the general fellowship. Another's hand lops the branch; but it is a man's own act when hatred or estrangement separates him from his neighbour, and he wots not that he thereby cuts himself off from the great world society. But, 8

[1] The cry of Oedipus the King (Soph. *Oed. T.* 1391) after the terrible disclosure. For the quotations following, compare vii. 38, 40, 41.

thanks be to Zeus who knits the bond of fellowship, it is in our power to coalesce once more with our neighbour, and recomplete the whole. Yet constant repetition of the severance makes reunion and restoration difficult for the separatist. The branch which is part of the original growth and has shared the continuous life of the tree, is not the same as one that has been lopped off and reingrafted, as the gardeners know well. So then—One at core, if not in creed.

9 Those who put obstacles in the way of your following the law of Reason cannot divert you from sound action; so likewise let them not give your charity a check. Make sure of both—of steadfastness in judgment and action, but also of gentleness towards those who try to baulk or otherwise annoy you. To lose your temper with them is no less weakness, than to abstain from action or to be cowed into giving in. Both are alike deserters from the ranks—the man who flinches, and the man who is estranged from his natural brother and friend.

10 Nature is never inferior to art; the arts are but imitations of nature. If so, nature in its most perfect and comprehensive form cannot fall short of true artist workmanship. But all the arts use the lower for the higher; and so too does nature. Thus we get at the origin of justice, which is the basis of all the other virtues; for we are not true to justice, if we strive for things secondary, or if we allow ourselves to be imposed upon, or draw hasty and fallible conclusions.

The things it so perturbs you to seek or shun, do not come to you; rather, you go to them. Only let your judgment of them hold its peace, and they on their side will remain stationary, and no one will see you either seeking them or shunning. 11

The soul becomes a "self-rounded sphere," when it neither strains outward, nor contracts inward by self-constriction and compression, but shines with the light, by which it sees all truth without and truth within. 12

Will any contemn me? See he to that. It is for me to see that neither by act nor word I merit contempt. Or hate me? Again, his affair. Mine is to be in charity and kindliness with every one, ready to show this very man his misconception, not in a carping spirit or with a parade of forbearance, but honestly and in good part, like old Phocion,[1] if indeed he meant what he said. That is the right inward temper, and before the eye of god man should not ever cherish resentment or indignation. How can it be an evil for you to follow the present authorisation of your own nature, and accept what Nature now holds seasonable? As man, are you not set here to bring about the advantage of the universe? 13

They despise yet fawn on one another; and to get the better of each other, cringe to one another. 14

'To be simple, sir, in all my dealings, that is my resolve!' What a hollow spurious ring it has! Tut, man, no need of professions. Truth will speak for 15

[1] Referring probably to Phocion's charge to his son, before drinking the hemlock, 'to bear no ill-will against the Athenians.'

itself; it should be written upon your forehead: it rings in the voice, it looks out of the eyes, just as in the lover's expression the beloved reads all. Goodness, true and simple, should be like musk, so redolent that, will-he nill-he, every one who draws near perceives its fragrance. But the affectation of simpleness is a dagger in the sleeve:[1] 'wolf-friendship' is the depth of meanness; beyond everything, shun that. Goodness, simplicity and kindness, look out of the eyes, and there is no mistaking.

16 The perfecting of life is a power residing in the soul, realised by indifference towards things indifferent. The indifference will be attained by contemplating everything in its elements, and also as a whole, and by remembering that nothing can imbue us with a particular view about itself or enforce an entrance; things are stationary, it is we who originate judgments regarding them, and as it were inscribe them upon our minds, when we need inscribe nothing, or can efface any inscription transcribed there unawares. The call upon self-discipline will not be long, only till life is done with. Why make a grievance and wish things otherwise? If they are in accordance with nature, rejoice therein and find all easy; if not, then seek what is in accord with your own nature, and press towards it through good repute or ill. The quest after one's own good is its own excuse.

17 Consider from whence each thing has come, of

[1] Literally, 'a crooked stick,' referring to the Greek proverb, 'Nothing can make a crooked stick straight.'

what materials it is composed, into what it is changing, what it will be like when changed, and that no harm can come to it.

### Heads of Philosophy 18

*First.* My relation towards men. We are made for one another: or—another point of view—I have been set at their head, as the ram heads the flock, or the bull the herd: or, going back to the beginning—If not atoms, then nature disposing all; if so, things lower exist for the higher, and the higher for one another.

*Second.* What are men like in board, in bed, and so on? above all, what principles do they hold binding? and how far does pride enter into their actual conduct?

*Third.* If others are doing right, you have no call to feel sore; if wrong, it is not wilful, but comes of ignorance. As "*No soul wilfully misses truth*," [1] so none wilfully disallows another's due; are not men distressed if called unjust, or ungracious, or grasping, or in any other way unneighbourly?

*Fourth.* You are like others, and often do wrong yourself. Even if you abstain from some forms of wrong, all the same you have the bent for wrong-doing, though cowardice, or desire for popularity, or some other low motive keeps you from wrong of the same kind.

*Fifth.* You cannot even be sure if they are doing wrong; for many actions depend upon some second-

[1] See vii. 63.

ary end. In short, one has much to learn, before one can make sure and certain about another's action.

*Sixth.* When sorely provoked and out of patience, remember that man's life is but for a moment; a little while, and we all lie stretched in death.

*Seventh.* Men's actions—resting with *them* and their Inner Selves—cannot agitate us, but our own views regarding them. Get rid of these, let judgment forego its indignation, and therewith anger departs. How achieve this? by reflecting that they cannot demean you. For if anything except what morally demeans is bad, you too must plead guilty to all sorts of wrongdoing, from brigandage [1] downwards.

*Eighth.* How much more unconscionable are our anger and vexation at the acts, than the acts which make us angry and vexed!

*Ninth.* Kindness is invincible if only it is honest, not fawning or insincere. What can the most aggressive do, if you keep persistently kind, and as occasion offers gently remonstrate, and seize the moment when he is bent on mischief, for trying quietly to convert him to a better frame of mind. 'Not so, my son, we are made for other ends; you cannot hurt me, you hurt yourself, my son.' Then point him gently to the general law of things, that neither do the bees act so, nor any of the gregarious animals; but avoid any touch of irony or fault-finding, and be affectionate and conciliatory in tone;

[1] x. 10 explains the reference.

not in schoolmaster style, or to show off before others, but quietly in his own ear, even if others are standing by.

Bear these nine heads in mind, gifts as it were of the nine Muses. While you still live, before it is too late, begin to be a man! Be on your guard against flattering as well as against petulance; both come of self-seeking, and both do harm. In fits of anger remind yourself that true manliness is not passion, but gentleness and courtesy, the more masculine as well as the more human: this it is, and not irritation or discontentment, that implies strength and nerve and manhood; the absence of passion gives the measure of its power. Anger, like grief, is a mark of weakness; both mean being wounded, and wincing.

*Tenth* and lastly—a gift, so please you, from Apollo, leader of the Choir. Not to expect the worthless to do wrong, is idiotcy; it is asking an impossibility. To allow them to wrong others, and to claim exemption for yourself, is graceless and tyrannical.

There are four moods to which your Inner Self 19
is liable, against which you must constantly be upon the watch, and suppress them as soon as detected with such reprimands as these:—It is a needless fancy: or, It is anti-social: or, It does not come from your heart—and not to speak from one's heart is a moral inconsequence: or, fourthly, You will never forgive yourself; for such a feeling implies subjection and abasement of the diviner ele-

ment in you to the perishable and less honourable portion, the body and its coarser apprehensions.

20 By nature, breath and all the igneous element in your composition ascend; yet in obedience to the order of things, they accept subordination and keep their place in the compound. Conversely, all the earthy and watery elements in you tend to descend; yet by upward levitation retain a position which is not theirs by nature. Thus the elements, we see, obey the law of things, and persistently retain their appointed place, until the signal for dissolution sounds their release. Fie on it, that your mind-element alone should disobey and resent the post assigned; though no violence is laid upon it, nothing but what is in accordance with its nature, yet it breaks away impatiently. For motions of injustice, intemperance, anger, vexation, fear, are simply a rebellion against nature. When our Inner Self chafes against anything that happens, it is like quitting its post: for it is made for holiness and god-fearing, no less than for justice; they form part of the idea of world-communion, and even take precedence of just dealing.

21 Where the life has no unity of aim, the man cannot live life at unity with himself. But it is not enough to say this, unless you go on to add what the true aim should be. In the idea of goods at large, as popularly understood, there is no unity, but only in goods of a certain kind, namely social goods; similarly for unity of aim, the basis of the aim must be social and unselfish. Direct all your inward

endeavours to this end, and you will give unity to all your actions, and be always consistent with yourself.

Think of the mountain-mouse [1] and the town-mouse, and the poor beast's scurry and scare! 22

Socrates called popular beliefs Bug-bears for children. 23

The Spartans at their festivals, for their guests set seats in the shade, for themselves sat where they could. 24

Socrates declined the invitation of Archelaus, son of Perdiccas, "*to avoid*" he said "*death with ignominy*"—to wit, receiving favours he could not return. 25

Among the statutes of the Ephesians was an injunction, to meditate continually on some ancient model of virtue. 26

The Pythagoreans bid us every morning lift our eyes to heaven, to meditate upon the heavenly bodies pursuing their everlasting round—their order, their purity, their nakedness. For no star wears a veil. 27

Think of Socrates with the sheepskin round his loins, when Xanthippe had marched off with his cloak, and what he said to his friends who modestly beat a retreat when they saw him in such a guise. 28

In reading and in writing you cannot give rules till you have obeyed them. Much more in life. 29

Slave that thou art, reason is not for thee! 30

[1] Marcus habitually uses 'mountain' to signify unperturbed withdrawal from the world, and the adjective here echoes x. 15, 23, and opening of iv. 3.

31 And my dear heart laughed within.[1]

32 Virtue they'll taunt and with hard words revile.[2]

33 To look for figs in winter is fool's work; so is it to look for a child, when the time is past.

34 As you fondle your little one, says Epictetus, murmur to yourself 'To-morrow perchance it will die.'—'Ominous, is it?'—'Nothing is ominous,' said the sage, 'that signifies an act of nature. Is it
35 ominous to harvest the ripe ears?' The green grape, the cluster, the raisin, change following change, not into nothingness but to the not yet realised.

36 "*No man can rob us of our will*," says Epictetus.[3]

37 Epictetus urged the need of a sound grammar of assent; and in dealing with the impulses, to take good heed to keep them subject to reservation, unselfish, and in due proportion to their object: always to refrain inclination, and to limit avoidance to things within our own control.

38 "*It is no trifle at stake*," he said—"*it means, are you in your senses, or are you not?*"

39 'What would you have?' Socrates used to say, 'rational men's souls, or irrational?'—'Rational.'—'Souls healthy or souls depraved?'—'Healthy.'—'Then why not seek for them?'—'Because we have them already.'—'Then why fight and be at variance?'

[1] Homer, *Od.* ix. 413.
[2] Hesiod, *Works and Days*, v. 184.
[3] Arrian, Epict. 1. xi. 37, iii. xxii. 105.

# BOOK XII

Animula vagula blandula,
Hospes comesque corporis,
Quae nunc abibis in loca?—*Hadrian*

All the good things to which you pray sooner or 1
later to attain may be yours at once, if only you will not stand in your own way; if only, leaving the past alone and committing the future to the hand of providence, you will direct the present and that only, in the way of holiness and justice: of holiness, that you may be glad in your apportioned lot, nature's assignment, it for you and you for it; of justice, that you may freely and without subterfuge speak truth and follow law and treat things at their worth, knowing no contravention from evil in another, nor from false view within, nor from sound nor yet sensation of this fleshly shell: for the part affected must look to that. If only, seeing that now you near your end, you will leave all else and pay sole reverence to your Inner Self and to the god within, if you will stand in fear not of life some day ending, but of never beginning to live at all in accord with nature's law, then indeed you will be a man, worthy of the universe that begat you, and no more a stranger to your fatherland, ever in amaze at the unexpectedness of what each day brings forth, and hanging upon this event or that.

2 God sees men's Inner Selves stripped of their material shells and husks and impurities. Mind to mind, his mental being touches only the like elements in us derivative and immanent from him. By accustoming yourself to the same habit, you will save yourself most part of the distracting strain. For he who looks not to his shell of flesh, will assuredly not make ado over raiment and house and reputation, intent on the mere trappings and stagings.

3 You consist of three parts—body, breath, mind. The first two are yours, to the extent of requiring your care: the third only is properly your own. Now if you separate from your true self—your understanding—all that others do or say, all that you have yourself done or said, all that perturbs you for the future, all that belongs to your material shell or vital breath and lies outside your own control, all finally that sweeps past you in the swirl of circumstance, if thus exempting and clearing your mind-faculty from the play of destiny, you enable it to live free and unrestricted, doing what is just, willing what befalls, and saying what is true—if, I say, you thus separate from your Inner Self the outer ties and attachments, the influences of time past and time to come, and so make yourself in the language of Empedocles

> A rounded sphere, poised in rotating rest;

and train yourself to live in what alone is life—the present, then you will be able, for life's remainder

and till death, to live on constant to the deity within, unperturbed, ingenuous, serene.

How strange it is, that every one loves himself 4
above all others, yet attaches less weight to his own view of himself, than to that of other men. Suppose, for instance, some god or some wise teacher stood at a man's elbow and bade him utter aloud each thought that came into his heart or mind, he could not endure it for a single day. So much more deference do we pay to what our neighbours think of us, than to our own selves.

How is it that the gods, who ordered all things 5
well and lovingly, overlooked this one thing; that some men, elect in virtue, having kept close covenant with the divine, and enjoyed intimate communion therewith by holy acts and sacred ministries, should not, when once dead, renew their being, but be utterly extinguished? If it indeed be so, be sure, had it been better otherwise, the gods would have so planned it. Were it right, it would be likewise possible; were it according to nature, nature would have brought it to pass. From its not being so, if as a fact it is not so, be assured it ought not so to be. Do you not see that in hazarding such questions you arraign the justice of god? nay we could not thus reason with the gods, but for their perfectness and justice. And from this it follows that they would never have allowed any unjust or unreasonable neglect of parts of the great order.

Practise even where you despair of success. Want 6
of practice makes the left hand helpless in all else,

but in handling the bridle it is more efficient than the right: that comes of practice.

7 Think what a man should be in body and soul, when death overtakes him: think of the shortness of life, of the unfathomable eternity behind and before, of the weakness of all things material.

8 Strip off the husks, and look at the underlying causes; look at the tendencies of action; at pain, pleasure, death, reputation; at man, his own disquieter; see how every contravention comes from within, not from without; how the view taken is everything.

9 In applying principles to action be like the boxer not the swordsman. The swordsman lays by his sword and takes it up again; but the boxer's hand is always there, he has nothing to do but to clench it.

10 Look at things as they are, discriminating matter, cause, and tendency.

11 How great is man's prerogative—to do nothing but what god approves, and to accept all that god assigns.

12 In the order of nature, we must not find fault with gods who do no wrong, witting or unwitting; nor yet with men, whose wrong is done unwittingly. Therefore find fault with none.

13 How silly and how strange, to be amazed at anything in life!

14 Either fixed necessity and an inviolable order, or a merciful providence, or a random and ungoverned medley. If an inviolable necessity, why resist? If a providence, waiting to be merciful, make yourself

worthy of the divine aid. If a chaos uncontrolled, be thankful that amid the wild waters you have within yourself an Inner governing mind. If the waves sweep you away, let them sweep flesh, breath and poor mortality; the mind they shall never sweep.

Shall the flame of a lamp give light till it is extin- 15
guished, and not lose its radiance; yet within you shall truth and justice and wisdom consent to premature extinction?

He gives me the impression of wrongdoing, but 16
after all how do I know, whether it is wrong? or supposing it was, that he did not upbraid himself for it—like the mourner defacing his own visage? He who would not have the vile do wrong, is like one who would not have the fig-tree bear juice in her figs, or infants squall, or the horse neigh, or anything else that is in the order of things. What else can result, his bent being what it is? If it aggrieves you, amend it.

If it is not your duty, do not do it: if it is not true, 17
do not say it.

Be it your endeavour always to look at the whole, 18
and see what the actual thing is that produces the impression, and resolve it by analysis into cause, matter, tendency, and duration of time within which it must cease to exist.

It is time to recognise that you have within you 19
something higher and more divine than that which produces the affections of sense, or just pulls the strings within. How is it with my understanding, at this moment? fear? suspicion? desire? or what?

20 First, do nothing at random, or unpurposed. Secondly, direct all action to some social end.

21 A little while and your place will know you no more; so too with everything you now see, and with every one now alive. All things change and pass and perish, that others may succeed.

22 The view taken is everything; and that rests with yourself. Disown the view, at will; and behold, the headland rounded, there is calm, still waters and a waveless bay.

23 No action whatsoever is the worse for ceasing, when the time for cessation comes: neither is the author of the action, merely because his action ceases. So too with that which is the sum of all our actions—life: when the time for cessation comes, it is none the worse merely because it ceases: nor do we impute evil to him, who at the right time brings the sequence to an end. Nature sets the right time and the limit; sometimes the individual nature with its bidding of old age, but in any case Nature at large, who by constant changes of the parts keeps the whole universe ever fresh and vigorous: and that which is of advantage to the universe is ever good and lovely. To the individual then cessation of life is no evil, for there is nothing in it demeaning, seeing that it lies outside our own control and comes not of self-seeking: and it is a good, in that to the universe it is seasonable, serviceable, and subserving other ends. Thus man becomes a vessel of god, at one with god in tendency and in intent.

24 Three maxims to fall back upon.

I. In action, do nothing at random, or at variance with the ways of justice: all outward circumstance, remember, is either chance or providence: you cannot quarrel with chance, and you cannot arraign providence.

II. Think what everything is from the seminal germ to its quickening with soul, and from soul-quickening to the yielding up of soul; think of what it is compounded and into what it is dissolved.

III. Supposing that translated to some higher region you could look down upon the world of man, and discern its manifold variety, and embrace within your vision his vast environment of things in air and things in heaven, remember that, however often so translated, you will see always the same sights, all uniform, all transitory. What food is here for pride?

Reject the view—and straightway, you are whole. 25
Who hinders the rejection?

Impatience at anything means that you forget— 26
That all things follow the law of Nature; that the fault lies at another's door; that everything which happens, ever did, ever will, ever does in every case so happen: further, that you forget man's brotherhood with all mankind, not by blood or physical descent, but by community in mind: and yet again that each man's mind is god, an efflux of deity; that nothing is strictly a man's own, but even his child, his body, his very soul, have come from god; that the view taken is everything; and that every one can live, or lose, the present alone.

27 Dwell in retrospect on those who gave the rein to passion, who scaled the highest pinnacles of ambition, fortune, feuds, and of every change and chance. Then reflect, Where are they all now? Smoke, ashes, and a tale, or less than a tale. Recall each instance of the kind—Fabius Catulinus on his farm, Lucius Lupus in his gardens, Stertinius at Baiæ, Tiberius at Capreæ, Velius Rufus, or any other such fanciful endeavour! how paltry all such striving! how far more philosophical simply to use the material supplied to make one's self just and wise and a follower of gods! The pride which masks as modesty is the most perverse of all.

28 To those who press the question, 'Where have you seen the gods, whence your conviction of their existence, that you worship them as you do?' I reply—first, they are visible even to the bodily eye: secondly, neither have I set eyes upon my soul, and yet I do it reverence. So is it with the gods; from my continual experience of their power, I have the conviction that they exist, and hold them in respect.

29 This is the way of salvation—to look throughly into everything and see what it really is, alike in matter and in cause; with your whole heart to do what is just and say what is true: and one thing more, to find the joy of life in heaping good on good so close, that not a chink is left between.

30 The light of the sun is one, even though disparted by walls, hills, or a hundred other things: its common substance is one, though disparted by any

number of individual bodies. So too soul is one, though disparted among any number of natures and individualities. And soul possessed of mind is one, though we think of it as distributed in parts. All the other constituents of the various wholes—breath, material elements, and so forth—possess neither sense nor mutual relationship; yet even they are held in union by the unifying element and identity of gravitation. But thought tends specifically towards its counterpart, and combines with it; the instinct of community refusing separation.

Why hanker for continuous existence? is it for 31
sensation, desire, growth? or again, for speech, utterance, thought? which of these seems worth the craving? If each and all of these are of small regard, address yourself to the final quest, the following of reason and of god. Reverence for them cannot be reconciled with repining at the losses death entails.

What a jot of infinite unfathomable time is as- 32
signed to any one of us! In a moment it vanishes into eternity. What a morsel of the sum of being! or of the sum of soul! on what a grain of the whole earth you crawl! Mindful of all this, regard one thing only as of moment—to do what your own nature directs, to bear what universal nature brings.

How goes it with your Inner Self? *that* is every- 33
thing. All else, in your control or out of it, is dust of the dead and smoke.

The best quickener to contempt of death is this— 34
that even those who account pleasure good and pain evil, contemn it notwithstanding.

35 For the man, to whom good means solely that which comes in season, to whom it is all one whether he follows the law of Reason in few acts or in many, to whom it matters not whether his outlook on the world be long or short—for that man death has no terrors.

36 Man, you have been a citizen of the great world-city. Five years or fifty, what matters it? To every man his due, as law allots. Why then protest? No tyrant gives you your dismissal, no unjust judge, but nature who gave you the admission. It is like the prætor discharging some player whom he has engaged.—'But the five acts are not complete; I have played but three.'—Good: life's drama, look you, is complete in three. The completeness is in his hands, who first authorised your composition, and now your dissolution; neither was your work. Serenely take your leave; serene as he who gives you the discharge.

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